Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

75¢

Shepherding the PAL Program for more than 32 years. PAGE 2

Signboard seeks to inspire chuckles as you pass by. PAGE 9

Bishop Camacho passes away

The Oleai Veterans Memorial lowers its flags to half-staff yesterday afternoon to pay respect to the passing of the late bishop emeritus Tomas Aguon Camacho of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa.

ERWIN ENCINARES

Volume XXVIII, Issue No. 45
TUESDAY MARCH 6, 2018
www.saipantribune.com
www.facebook.com/saipantribune

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Bishop emeritus Tomas Aguon Camacho, the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa's first bishop, passed away yesterday at the Commonwealth Health Center following a lingering illness. He was 84.

Camacho's successor, Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez, said it is with deep sorrow that he received the news of Camacho's death.

"…he returned to the Lord whom he had served so well throughout the years as our bishop in the Northern Marianas. He left us, but he will always be remembered for his warm

See BISHOP on Page 4

Hofschneider resigns as CEC commissioner

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» CEC in critical situation as there are only 5 commissioners again

Commonwealth Election Commission member and vice chair pro tem Donald M. Hofschneider has recently resigned, leaving CEC with only five commissioners again.

CEC executive director Julita Villagomez said that having only five commissioners is critical for CEC because if one remaining member fails to show up at a board meeting, there will be no quorum.

Hofschneider's resignation took

See HOFSCHNEIDER on Page 4

'Draft letter asks GAO about parole termination'

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A bipartisan letter is being drafted to ask the Government Accountability Office to study the effects of a possible termination of the Marianas parole authority, according to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP)

Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* in a press conference last week that there is a "bipartisan, bicameral letter" to request GAO to prepare a study on the effect of terminating the parole authority in the Marianas.

Sablan, who is on the alert for the possible termination of the pa-

See LETTER on Page 4

Torres: 'It's time' for Cabinet salary hike

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres believes it is time to give salary raises to department chiefs due to their expansive duties and responsibilities.

Torres

Torres noted in a previous interview that he believes it is time to raise the salaries of his Cabinet members, while "deputies in other departments" make significantly more.

"I definitely believe that it is about time that they get a higher salary. They are the only position that was not given a raise. With all the responsibilities and duties the secretaries have, for sure, it's about time that they get a salary increase," he said.

According to Torres, Cabinet members make on average about $54,000 per annum, while "deputies in other departments" make about $50,000 to $90,000 per annum.

The House of Representatives passed last Feb. 27 Rep. John Paul Sablan's (R-Saipan) House Bill

See TORRES on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
President Trump appears unbowed by criticism of his planned tariffs on steel and aluminum.

PAGE 13

NATION
After the Parkland shooting, even idle school threats are getting a tough response.

PAGE 14

LIFE & STYLE
Against all odds, love won out at the 90th Academy Awards.

PAGE 19

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Shepherding the PAL program for more than 32 years

By BEA CABRERA
bea cabrera@saipanbtribune.com
REPORTER

As a young person, Hajime Inuoe, the current chief operating officer of the Seisa Group, was himself a participant of the group's Participate and Learn program many years ago.

As a student of the Seisa High School in Japan, that experience brought him to Saipan a long time ago and exposed him to the value of the program and brought him within the sphere of influence of Yasuo Miyasawa, the founder and CEO of Seisa Group.

"If I had no influence from him, I might be a typical Japanese doing job for the money only. At Seisa, we are working for the future to make the world brighter. A normal Japanese would be working to…have a better vehicle, a big house and those are good reasons," Inoue said. "Miyazawa's influence is be a good person, learn, educate, explore, reach out so you can help others achieve the same. These are the true riches of life."

For the last 32 years, the Seisa Group has been bringing Seisa High School students from Japan to Saipan to learn, explore, and build relationships under the PAL program's three principles: understanding each other, leaving nobody out and making friends. These principles are integrated in the studies and exchange programs between Saipan and Japanese students who take part in the program.

Miyasawa himself first came to the CNMI in 1985. He saw the beauty of Saipan and, with it, the opportunity for his Japanese students to expand education beyond the four walls of a classroom.

"The PAL program began with the help and guidance of Bert Thompson and his wife Doris, with whom I was very good friends with in Guam. When Bert transferred to Saipan and became the principal of Marianas High School, I went to visit them and [learned that] Saipan and Japan have a long history of war and battles," he said.

"Bert and I talked and we immediately decided that we can learn more about our past, present and future if we have a program where Saipan and Japanese students can participate, cultivate peace and work together. I am proud to say that it has been 32 years since," he added.

Miyazawa said the Seisa Group started with a very small program and it was difficult explaining to Saipan schools why a PAL program is important.

Yasuo Miyasawa, the founder and CEO of Seisa Group.
BEA CABRERA

"At that time teachers and students of MHS did not understand the importance and significance of this program. Bert and Doris tried to show them the urgency and importance of the program. It is one that will be very good for students and that something must be done," he said

"At that time, Bert had lessons for vocational training where he took in Seisa students and put them into the vocational learning here. They did not speak English at all but they tried to communicate," he added.

From there, the small group slowly grew, learning and building relationships.

"The process was akin to a dance where you slowly get the steps and slowly understands its importance. Our students who were not used to traveling and being with different people were so happy to meet new friends and build on that relationship," he said.

He recalled that it was former MHS principal Vic Cepeda who further opened the door for the program to flourish to what it is today.

"I would get asked, 'Why Saipan?' I tell them it is because the people here are warm, open-minded and welcoming to our students. Some of our students had one-track minds and others were very shy. In the end, our students returned to Japan, bringing with them the warmth and cherished friendships they made because the program break barriers," he added.

Miyazawa says the PAL program is not just a sightseeing tour. Students meticulously study the history of Saipan and Japan before they get here.

"Our students study the history between Saipan and Japan, Saipan and U.S., and Japan and U.S. so that they learn deeply. Seisa students learn the culture and history of Saipan, including the war and peace that world wars brought into the islands," he said.

"MHS holds a Cultural Day for our students so they can be exposed, build friendships and nurture the experience. This is a good way to really understand the differences of each other," he added.

One of the highlights of the PAL program is the exchange program, where Saipan students get to visit Japan and vice versa to know more about day-to-day living.

"I remember the first Saipan students that visited Japan belonged to families with different socio-economic background and, because of that, you know there are barriers within the group. However, after spending 10 days in Japan, the relationship changed; they found that the difference is nothing when you understand each other," Miyazawa said.

"The result is the same with our Japanese students. They become less scared, less selfish, and come out of it amazed. Over the years and with the PAL program experience, we have former students who became doctors, attorneys and one even became a member of the parliament," he added.

Miyazawa, who is almost 70 years old, is passing the baton to Inuoe.

Before becoming an educator and founder/CEO of Seisa Group, Miyazawa's childhood dream was to be a cowboy.

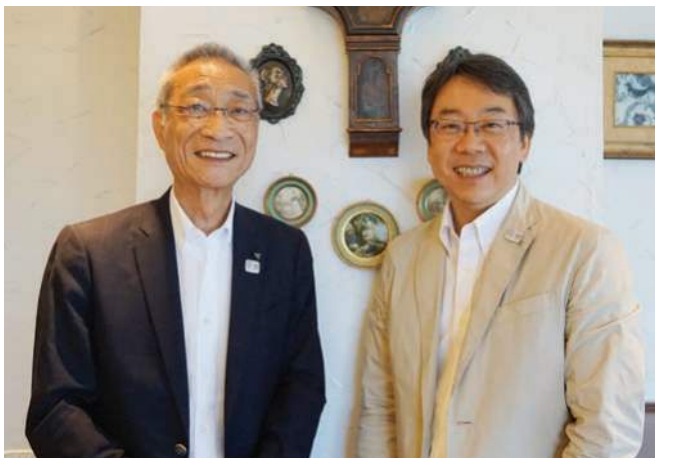
"I was a fan of the American TV show *Rawhide* where the story revolved on bringing cows and traveling 3,000 kilometers from west to east and there were many accidents and events along the way but cooperation was key to reaching their destination," he said.

"My friends wanted to be a doctor, an astronaut, and I was the only one who wanted to be cowboy. It did not come true, obviously, but yes, that was my childhood dream."

Although he did not become a cowboy, Miyazawa's experience of bringing students from Japan to Saipan and vice versa to learn and have a better perspective about people and the world is like the story of the cowboy leading his herd to a better place.

"Students come to me and say, 'Kaicho' (*chairman in Japanese*), thank you very much. They say, "I enjoyed the program and I learned that I could make friends with Saipan people and know more about the world. I now have the courage to change my situation and please watch me, *kaicho*.' Those times are my happiest moments. I know these students, their families and backgrounds and the thought that I helped touch their lives is something else."

Miyazawa, who plans to retire soon, considers the PAL program not a school or a business matter but the legacy of his life.


Yasuo Miyasawa, the founder and CEO of Seisa Group, is joined by Hajime Inuoe, chief operating officer of the Seisa Group.
BEA CABRERA

CNMI govt converting to prepaid CUC meters

Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson announced yesterday that the CNMI government is now converting to prepaid meters to regulate power consumption and increase cost-savings.

Larson noted that the kick-off for utilization of prepaid meters began on March 1, adding that the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has already conducted a presentation on the meters with designated agency representatives who will be monitoring and/or purchasing power for their respective departments and agencies, including the islands of Tinian and Rota.

"As soon as CUC announced that it would allow government departments to enroll in the pre-pay program, we began planning our conversion to the prepaid system. We know that this will further allow the government to regulate the usage of power and operate within their budget. Previously, the pre-pay program was only available to residential customers, and we are pleased that this program will also help eliminate billing disputes between the government and CUC," Larson said.

In October of last year, the launch of the CUC pre-pay program was finally opened up to government agencies.

With the arrival of new prepaid meters, the CNMI government pushed to complete the conversion process.

"Finance has been working closely with CUC for this conversion and we've had ongoing discussions on resolving outstanding balances. This conversion will ensure greater accountability for our power usage as a whole," said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres. "Our overall goal is to clear our balances and sustain our accounts. We have resolved outstanding balances that we've had over the years and we are pleased to move forward with this and look toward strengthening our accountability and increasing savings Commonwealth-wide."

Over the course of three months, more than 400 meters have been installed in government departments and agencies and testing of these accounts are ongoing to ensure efficient implementation.

Last week, Finance made a significant payment to CUC and continues to reconcile accounts.

According to CUC, the Web-Based Electric Prepay Program allows customers to benefit from a specialized meter called the Nighthawk electric meter that permits a customer to go online, get access to the customer Web-portal called Pay-Go, and purchase or pay for power before utilization. ***(PR)***

2017 IIHS TOP SAFETY PICK
2 YEARS IN A ROW
OUT WITH THE OLD
IN WITH A NEW
*0% DOWN
*2.9% FINANCING
2018
Tucson
STARTING AT
$22,995
$162
PER PAYCHECK
TO LEARN MORE VISIT: WWW.TRIPLEJSAIPAN.COM
Customers First
TRIPLE J
TRIPLE J MOTORS
Beach Road, Chalan LauLau
OPEN
Open: Mon-Fri: 8am to 6pm • Sat: 8am to 5pm
Tel: 234-7133/234-3051
autosales@triplejsaipan.com
WWW.TRIPLEJSAIPAN.COM
*On approved credit (OAC). Some conditions apply. Doc fees and registration not included. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Vehicles may not be exactly as shown. See dealer for mare details. Maximum credit card payment toward vehicle purchase is 2,500. While supplies last. Tucson GL 2WD total price is $22,995. Financed at 2.9% APR for 60 monthly payments of $350.34 or $162 per paycheck based on 15% down-payment and 26 pay periods per year. Total deferred price is $21,020.40.
HYUNDAI

Palacios: Ending tax on earned income tax credit worth a look

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Senate President Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan) said yesterday that ending taxes on earned income tax credit for higher tax returns toward Marianas taxpayers is worth looking into.

In an interview, Palacios said that Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's (Ind-MP) suggestion to end the tax on earned income tax credit should be further studied if to be repealed entirely.

"It certainly is something to look at if it is a nexus to increasing employment opportunities and incentivize residents to seek jobs," said Palacios, adding that it was a "valid proposal."

"We just got to see…what the impact is financially," he said, adding that the cost of it in the past was what urged the 11th Legislature to act on what is now known as Public Law 11-25, the law that imposes a 100-percent tax on any of the credit that could be refunded.

"I'm for it in general. We just got to figure out the impact cost particularly," he said.

House Speaker Rafael Demapan (R-Saipan) did not immediately respond to *Saipan Tribune*'s request for comment.

Sablan over the weekend sent a letter to both presiding officers of the 20th CNMI Legislature, requesting that they end the tax on earned income tax credit.

Palacios

"The estimate is $16 million would be refunded to taxpayers each year, if the Legislature repealed [P.L. 11-25]," Sablan said in a statement. He added that P.L. 11-25 was not entirely legal, according to section 601 of the Marianas Covenant of the Political Union with the United States.

Being part of the federal system, the earned income tax credit is also covered under section 601, which states that the federal tax system would be applied in the Marianas as well. Sablan pointed out, however, the legality of P.L. 11-25 was not the issue.

Reinstatement of the earned income tax credit would do much to bring U.S. workers off the sidelines and into jobs in the Marianas," he said, adding that it could be tied into his H.R. 4869, or his legislation that extends the transitional period for the foreign worker program in the CNMI.

BISHOP

From Page 1

smile and his dedicated service to our church and to the whole of the CNMI," Jimenez said in statement.

Messages of condolences poured in on social media and leaders of the CNMI expressed their sympathies in statements to the *Saipan Tribune.*

The Chalan Kanoa Diocese announced Camacho's passing in a brief message on its Facebook page. Camacho served as the diocese's bishop from 1984 to 2010.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres ordered that CNMI and United States flags be flown at half-staff starting yesterday "as a mark of solemn respect." That included flags at the Juan Atalig Sablan Memorial Building—the Governor's Office on Capitol Hill—and on all public buildings and grounds until the day of Camacho's interment.

Camacho was the 2008 *Saipan Tribune* Person of the Year.

Torres announced Camacho's passing in a social media posting earlier in the morning on behalf of his wife, first lady Diann, his family, and himself.

On a personal note, Torres said he remembers the blessings he and his family received from Camacho throughout the years.

"For 14 years, I joined Diann's family every Christmas to celebrate the *niño* at his house, and we were always able to receive the best advice about everything. Even when he was sick, he gave us advice about how to be great parents and how to strengthen our marriage and our relationship with God. He also told us to continue to do good deeds and to always believe in our Lord," he said.

To the very end, Torres recounted, Camacho didn't fail to give him his sage advice.

"Last night when Diann and I visited him at the hospital, he still gave us advice for our family and for me as governor and that he will always pray for us and the people of our Commonwealth. Even to his last breath, he continued to provide advice and prayer for our family and our people," he said.

More tributes

Camacho's passing hits close to home for Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) as the late bishop emeritus is the congressman's uncle.

"Bishop Emeritus Tomas Camacho was both my uncle and spiritual advisor. When I was first elected in 2008, he gave me a Bible and asked me to use this Holy Book to take my oath of office. He told me that by doing so, I would be bringing the prayers of the people of the Northern Marianas with me to Congress," he said in an email to *Saipan Tribune*.

Since then, Sablan has taken five oaths of office as a member of the U.S. Congress.

Sablan said he would surely miss Camacho's frequent visits to see him whenever the latter was in Washington, D.C.

"Some of my more memorable moments are those when Bishop Camacho would come visit the congressional office to talk with me about issues in our community, both the obvious and the obscure facing our people. Later on, it became necessary that I take the ride to his home because of his deteriorating health. Our last conversation was over the phone, Thursday, Nov. 23, 2017. That was Thanksgiving Day. I sensed then that we wouldn't have too many visits remaining," he said.

Rep. Angel Demapan (R-Saipan), Sablan's opponent for the delegate seat in November, said Camacho has touched the lives of many in the Commonwealth through his friendship, spiritual guidance, advice, and wisdom.

Mount Carmel School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero said aside from being the first bishop of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, Camacho also taught at the school and served as a monsignor when MCS was still under the Archdiocese of Agana.

"Even back then, he had a significant impact on our school, working with visionary and inspiring leaders like the late Sr. Mary Louse Balzarini," he told *Saipan Tribune.*

Deleon Guerrero said after he became bishop, Camacho led some important transformations at the school, which included earning the school's first accreditation, upgrading campus facilities, and improving the school's corporate and governance structure.

"He truly helped usher the school into a 21st century education," he said.

On a personal note, Deleon Guerrero said Camacho had a profound impact on his life.

"As a junior high student, I vividly recall him celebrating Mass with the school and asking the student body what it meant be a beacon. I was the only student who stood up and shared my response, that is to inspire hope in others. He then commended me for my courage in speaking up and for my insight. … And when I graduated from high school, I was honored to be recognized by him with Mount Carmel School's Bishop's Award for Service and Leadership," he said.

Sen. Paul Camacho (Ind-Rota) also mourned the passing of Camacho.

"…He was a true church leader who was committed to the poor and marginalized of his diocese," he said in a statement.

Born on Sept. 18, 1933, Camacho was ordained priest on June 14, 1961, at the age of 27. On Nov. 8, 1984, then Pope John Paul II appointed him as the first bishop of the newly created Roman Catholic Diocese of Chalan Kanoa. He was consecrated on Jan. 13, 1985, and served as head of the diocese from 1984 until his retirement on April 6, 2010.

After Camacho's retirement, he lived in his residence in Kannat Tabla.

Camacho's life was celebrated at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral Mass starting at 6pm yesterday, followed by rosary, and it will continue each evening until next Monday. The funeral Mass is scheduled for Tuesday, March 13, 2018, at 11am at Mt. Carmel Cathedral.

HOFSCHNEIDER

From Page 1

effect last Feb. 16. His third four-year term as commissioner representing Tinian and Aguiguan is supposed to expire on Oct. 18, 2020. He first served as commissioner in 2008.

Hofschneider cited unspecified personal reasons when he submitted his resignation to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres.

His resignation could prove problematic for the CEC due to the forthcoming November 2018 general election.

"Therefore, it is imperative that I resign from this position, so there will be ample time for you to appoint someone to fill this vacancy," Hofschneider told the governor in the resignation letter.

The remaining commissioner representing Tinian and Aguiguan is Joseph E. Santos.

At present, commissioner Jesus Sablan, of Saipan, has been serving as CEC chairman pro tempore since Frances Sablan's term expired last August.

Jesus Sablan's four-year term, however, will expire on Oct. 27, 2018.

Patricia Mareham recently joined as commission representing Carolinians of Saipan. There are still three vacant commissioner's positions for Saipan and the Northern Islands.

Rota has two commissioners: Leilanie Manglona and Esther Yatar.

TORRES

From Page 1

20-35, HD2, with a vote of 15-3, that would give Cabinet officials up to 80-percent salary hikes.

Reps. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan), Vinson Sablan (Ind-Saipan), and minority leader Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) voted against the bill.

Sablan amended the bill to allow for the inclusion of the director of the new Office of Planning and Development, as well as to amend the Cabinet members' salaries.

Rep. Vinson Sablan (Ind-Saipan), one of three who voted against H.B. 20-35, said in a statement that the total additional funding required to reflect the Cabinet member's salary adjustments was significantly high.

"The total additional funds needed for the adjustment is $747,385 [per] year, assuming all the officials receive the maximum cap. We are looking at an approximate $10,000 average raise to an already significant pay level per annum per official," said Vinson Sablan.

"These funds could go to pay adjustments of entry-level or mid-level employees who have been waiting years for adjustments. These are also funds that could be used to pay down [government] obligations. At the end of the day, it's a question of where our priorities should be as a government," he said, adding that he believes additional funding obtained through government revenues should go to government services for the public's benefit.

The governor, during the same interview with *Saipan Tribune,* said that more priority would be placed on appropriating funding "the right way."

"Everything that we do affects the fiscal funding. We have another bill…to turn the Northern Marianas Trades Institute into a department. That is also a budget constraint in terms of the whole calculation of revenue. That is another one of the priorities that we need to look into," he said, commenting on the bill.

H.B. 20-35, HD2 now heads to the Senate for review and action.

LETTER

From Page 1

role authority, also said in the same press conference that he would be sending a letter to the Secretary of Homeland Security requesting to have the parole authority continued, while looking at draft legislation to introduce, if not find a way to insert it in other legislations, for the continuation of the parole authority.

He reportedly met with members of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Homeland Security Investigations, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in Washington, D.C., Hawaii, and the CNMI, who have voiced concerns regarding the enforcement of the parole program.

"[U.S. President Donald J. Trump] only cares about protecting the borders. I care about protecting our borders too and addressing issues that our law enforcement authorities have found in implementing the Marianas parole system," he said.

"I think it's possible to clip the system so that there is more accountability, more vetting, and more resources for enforcement without harming our tourism economy," he added.

The Marianas parole authority allows the CNMI to individually vet tourists who are from both Russia and China. While tourists from both countries require a U.S. visa to enter the U.S. territory, both countries' nationals may enter the CNMI as tourists because of this program.

Should the program be terminated, it would cost the CNMI a little less than half of its total tourist arrivals in fiscal year 2017.

While noting that the termination of the parole authority is completely the discretion of the U.S. executive branch, Sablan said he will use his position in the U.S. Congress to "reinstate a system" that addresses problems while maintaining access to Chinese tourists.

Sablan did not elaborate.

According to Sablan, the Marianas parole authority may be in jeopardy as he noted that reports from CBP, HSI, and USCIS point toward the difficulty in enforcing the parole authority without abuse. He added that overstaying tourists, working tourists, on-the-job deaths of workers who are believed to be tourists, minimum wage violations, birth tourism, and more contribute to the problematic situation.

The Marianas parole authority allows Russian and Chinese nationals to enter the CNMI as tourists after being vetted by CBP officials.

Fires destroy acres of vegetation on Tinian, Rota

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Brush fires of still unknown cause destroyed several acres of vegetation on Tinian and Rota over the weekend.

This developed as the U.S. National Weather Service issued Sunday a red flag warning for Guam, which means that critical fire weather conditions are either occurring now or will shortly.

A combination of strong winds, low humidity, and warm temperature will create ideal conditions for the rapid spread of wildfires, the service warning said.

Last Tuesday, USNWS said dry weather persists across the Marianas and little change is expected the next couple of weeks. USNWS warned that fire danger continues to increase as strong winds in the next couple of days will cause any fires that do occur to spread faster.

Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services spokesman Derek Gersonde said that last Friday DFEMS Tinian received a call at 7:40pm about wildland fire at Marpo Heights. Firefighters immediately responded and controlled the blaze at 11:30pm Friday.

Gersonde said a total of 10 wildland fires were reported at Marpo Valley on Tinian until Saturday.

He said DFEMS received numerous calls reporting multiple wildland fires on Tinian's North Field.

On Rota, a bush fire occurred in Gampapa area on Saturday, but no one was reported injured.

Gersonde advised people to refrain from burning as the dry season is upon the CNMI.

"Due to high winds, a small fire can turn into a wildfire," Gersonde said.

Rios children receive CNMI flag

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The children of former Saipan mayor Jose Santos Rios were presented with the CNMI flag that was raised during their father's memorial service last Feb. 23.

On Friday, Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang invited the children of Rios to the Saipan Mayor's Office along Beach Road so they could receive the flag.

Apatang said it is only fitting for the CNMI flag to remind Rios' children of what their father contributed to the CNMI.

According to Rios' daughter, Remay McNalley, she and her siblings were also presented with a United States flag, but being given a CNMI flag also means a lot to them as their father greatly loved the CNMI.

McNalley said that Rios was one of the founding fathers of the CNMI's Flame Tree Festival, a strong advocate of indigenous rights, and was behind one of the first war museums in the CNMI dedicated to preserving World War II relics.

McNalley also said that Rios had a generous heart. "He was extremely shy and humble… he helped without asking for anything in return and didn't need recognition for it," she said.

The Saipan Mayor's Office, in conjunction with the Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council, held Rios' memorial last Feb. 23 at the leadership *kiosku* in Chalan Kanoa.

Rios was also given a military funeral at the veteran's cemetery in Washington state on Feb. 2, 2018.

Rios served as Saipan mayor from Jan. 8, 1982, to Jan. 7, 1986. He was the island's third mayor since the Northern Mariana Islands became a U.S. commonwealth.

Rios was born on Dec. 19, 1939, and passed away on Jan. 21, 2018.

Municipal council administrator Frances Muña said that Rios passed away a little over a month after celebrating his 78th birthday.

Rios enlisted in the U.S. Army and was assigned to South Korea. Rios later joined the U.S. Peace Corps and was stationed in Chuuk.

Rios is survived by his wife Emilia and children Roy Rios, Marie Martinez, Remay McNally, and Joseph Rios Jr.

Labor to establish apprenticeship program

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

To keep up with its mandate of employing U.S. citizens, the CNMI Department of Labor is looking at establishing apprenticeship programs with construction companies as partners.

"We are actually trying to set up a meeting to meet with Pacific Rim [Contractors] so that we can assist them and see what their plans are with regards to training. The construction industry is very lacking as far as U.S. citizens are concerned so we want to do a partnership with them such as an apprenticeship program," said Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente.

"We haven't met with them and this is just one of the things that we want to discuss so we are setting up that meeting as soon as possible," she added.

Pacific Rim is a Guam-based contractor who will reportedly continue the construction of the Imperial Pacific Resort in Garapan.

In an earlier interview, Pacific Rim president Keith Stewart, said that the target right now is to meet the requirements IPI has established with the CNMI government, which is to build 250 rooms at Imperial Pacific Resort by August this year and help grow the workforce.

"We signed a contract with IPI… so we are looking for talented craftsmen and craftswomen. If you have the talent and we are looking at every trade right now, we have a lot of opportunities," he said.

"We are looking to hire everyone we can possibly hire on Saipan… As a Guam-based contractor, we've only hired local workers, so that is our first choice," he added.

Aside from IPI, Pacific Rim is also involved with other construction projects on island such as the Isa Villas on Capital Hill. Isa Villas is a low-cost housing project that aims to build 27 units. Construction is expected to be finished by the end of this year.

Benavente said an apprenticeship program with Pacific Rim is ideal because they are a new company on island.

"Pacific Rim is brand new on island and I am also new as labor secretary so it is an opportune time for us to meet a new set of workers and see the possibilities for our local workforce," she said.

"They are currently working on a big project and we would like to see and see how the CNMI Dept. of Labor can tie up training initiatives for our people with this construction company and make it work for the CNMI citizens and U.S. citizens," she added

Last month, IPI through the Hasselback Law Firm was able to acquire over 1,044 H2B visas for various construction work positions.

"They did that on their own and the Dept. of Labor is here to assist all companies with their initiatives to employ people in the CNMI whether they are U.S. citizens or not. I congratulate them and looking forward for the construction industry to flourish," Benavente said.

"As for the foreign workers, we totally understand the need of construction workers to come from off-island because of the lack of workers here, but we also have to always remember our mandate to always put U.S. citizens in these jobs," she added.

BIBA!
CELEBRATE CULTURAL HERITAGE MONTH WITH THESE
FREE PHONES!*
BLU Studio J8
Samsung Galaxy S7
Samsung J5 Pro
BLU Grand XL
SAMSUNG
J5 PRO
Get more for less. 10GB
Plan includes UNLIMITED TALK & TEXT $50
IT&E
store.ite.net ite_cnmi ite.cnmi
*Terms & conditions apply. 24 month contract required for the Galaxy S7 or Galaxy J5 Pro on the $50 postpaid plan. 12 month contract required for the Studio J8 or Grand XL on the $50 postpaid plan. Online purchases are for new activations only. Credit check required. While supplies last. See stores for details.

Fiesta, Kanoa Resort, Herman's Bakery sponsor bins

Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan and Kanoa Resort, both divisions of TanHoldings Corp., have signed up as the newest sponsors of the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance's Adopt-a-Bin Program.

Herman's Modern Bakery Inc. has also signed up as a sponsor of the bin at Obyan Beach, a popular dive spot and favorite location for weekend picnics and family outings.

Fiesta Resort general manager Wendi Herring said the opportunity to partner up with Kanoa Resort for sponsorship of MINA's recycling bin at Sugar Dock is just one of the many ways in which their corporate responsibility extends to the community.

"As hospitality professionals, we feel that our participation in this program as sponsors allows MINA to continue to push the message of recycling and keeping our island clean, for residents and tourists alike," Herring said.

Martin Jambor, general manager for Kanoa Resort, echoed Herring's sentiment. "We take pride in our company's dedication to keeping this area clean and litter-free. We are also the sponsors for the Sugar Dock Adopt-a-Beach Program, so MINA's bin at Sugar Dock is a perfect fit."

As the oldest local business organization on Saipan, Herman's Bakery takes pride in the island and welfare of the community, and is happy to continue to contribute to maintaining its pristine beauty, for locals and tourists alike, said Ana G. Hayes, general manager.

"Our land is our home," she said. "We're here for the long haul, and feel that part of our responsibility is to give back to the community. MINA's program is one that we feel very strongly about, and one that allows us to contribute in a way that adds to the quality of life here on the islands. We're now in the third generation of management at Herman's, and the fourth generation is coming up learning about responsibility for the environment; they will definitely be included in our semi-annual cleanup of the Obyan Beach bin area."

Bin sponsorship is a vital component of the program, and covers the expense for the weekly collection and transfer service, as well as semi-annual cleanups by their corporate volunteers.

Now in its eighth year, the program has 20 bins located in strategic locations throughout the island, which is a benefit for beach-goers as the receptacle for recyclable items. Data collected at the transfer station reflects that more than 28 tons of trash were collected over the last two-year period, a reflection on the effectiveness of the program, which keeps land-based sources of pollutants out of the waters of the lagoon.

Bin sponsorship, a vital component of the program, pays for the weekly collection and transfer service, as well as bi-annual cleanups by their corporate volunteers, according to MINA executive director Roberta Guerrero.

"Sponsors are what make any program a success, and it is particularly gratifying to know that our work is supported by organizations such as Fiesta Resort & Spa and Kanoa Resort, who believe in the work that we do," she said.

MINA has four more bins for sponsorship: San Antonio Beach, Laly 4, Paupau Beach (north), and Marine Beach—which will bring all 20 into full support by the community.

For more information about the program and becoming a sponsor, call (670)233-7333(REEF) or email minaoutreach@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Philippine consular outreach next week

The Philippine Consulate General in Guam will be holding a mobile consular outreach on Saipan on March 13-15, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

The consulate general, in coordination with Philippine Honorary Consul to the CNMI Glicerio Arago, announced yesterday that the schedule for biometrics capturing of the e-passport applications is already available.

Note that all e-passport applications require the personal appearance of the applicant. Please wear proper attire (i.e., shirt with collar).

Applicants on the list are advised to be present at the venue on the date and time indicated in the schedule. Due to the start of the new ePassport system, we are strictly implementing the cancellation of "no-show" applicants.

For more information and confirmation, call (670)233-6293 and ask for Mel Santos. ***(PR)***

Another defendant in racketeering lawsuit dismissed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court dismissed last week the claims against a woman who was among three defendants in a racketeering lawsuit filed by a businessman and his former company.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona dismissed with prejudice the claims against Joann P. Hensley at the request of plaintiff Il Hwan Kim and his former company, KSA Corp.

Dismissal with prejudice means Kim and KSA can no longer re-file the claims against Hensley.

Kim and KSA asked the court to issue a default judgment against Hensley, Hun Jin An, and Jeong Eun Tack who allegedly continue to fail to respond to this case.

At a hearing last week on the motion for default judgment, Manglona pointed out that Hensley filed an answer and that the court did not see a proof of service filed for the motion.

Rene Homes, counsel for Kim and KSA, conferred with Kim, then moved to dismiss the claims against Hensley.

Manglona granted the motion.

Manglona had questions regarding the service of process on An. The judge said the court did not have jurisdiction on An because he was never legally served with the lawsuit.

Holmes requested for more time to research this issue.

Jennifer Dockter is the original counsel for plaintiffs Kim and KSA. Dockter had moved back to the U.S. mainland with her family.

Manglona stated that the service on Taek was proper.

Manglona gave Holmes time in order for her to review the record, case law, and to discuss the case with her client.

Holmes later contacted the courtroom deputy and requested to take the resumption of the hearing off-calendar.

Holmes said they will file a motion to withdraw their motion for default judgment and will file a motion to amend the complaint.

Kim and KSA alleged in their lawsuit that the defendants conspired to steal millions of dollars from him for his hotel and casino project on Saipan.

Aside from those three defendants, Kim and KSA Corp. also sued former House speaker Oscar M. Babauta, Department of Public Lands employee Ramon S. Salas, and 10 unnamed co-defendants pursuant to the Racketeer Influence and Corrupt Organizations Act and other causes of action.

The plaintiffs want the defendants held liable for damages, court costs, and attorney's fees.

Last year, the court dismissed with prejudice the claims against Babauta.

Last January, Manglona also dismissed the claims against DPL employee Ramon Salas.

Speaker wants new retirement fund

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

House Speaker Rafael Demapan (R-Saipan) wants a new retirement plan created for Commonwealth government employees.

In their House session last Feb. 27, 2018, Demapan introduced House Bill 20-157, where he proposes to re-establish a new retirement fund.

"I was approached by several government employees to see whether it was possible to have another retirement [fund]," said the speaker, recognizing that just recently, the Commonwealth government entered settlement after the previous retirement fund went bankrupt.

"…Because of the hard-working government employees, I feel that it is due time that they should have a retirement program—a safety net for their hard, continuous services upon retirement."

The bill increases the normal retirement age to 65 years, while also eliminating the occupational disability benefit since "an identical benefit is provided under the Workers Compensation Program," among many other changes.

"[Retirees] should have something that is comfortable for their families so that when they take the time to retire, they would have something," said Demapan in an interview.

"Because of the increase in government revenue…I guess that is the reason why I proposed this new retirement program for these government workers.

The bill establishes a new retirement fund board of trustees, which consists of seven members serving four-year terms. The board, besides operating the pension fund program, also selects and hires the retirement fund chief executive officer.

The bill sets the new early retirement age at 55 years old, and all those seeking retirement should have to apply to the board of trustees.

The House Ways and Means Committee was tasked with reviewing H.B. 20-157.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
MVA-RFP-18-2011

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

Submission /Closing Date: March 29, 2018 Time: 3:00 p.m.

For: Local Public Relation and Media Services

Submit sealed proposals to: Marianas Visitors Authority, Procurement Office
San Jose Professional Building, Beach Rd., San Jose
P.O. Box 500861, Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the Scope of Work on or after **February 26, 2018**, at the **Marianas Visitors Authority Office, San Jose Professional Building, Beach Road, San Jose, Saipan**, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Proposals submitted from individuals outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or certified courier services by **March 29, 2018**, and must be received within seven (7) working days of that date. Proposers from outside the Commonwealth must notify the MVA/ Mr. David B. Muna in writing of their intent to submit a proposal in order to receive the additional seven (7) days for the receipt of the actual Proposal Documents. Participants outside the **Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands** must submit a **Notice of Intent** by any mode of written communication including facsimile at+1-670-664-3237 or email to dmuna@mymarianas.com, and must be received by 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on **March 29, 2018**.

All questions regarding this RFP must be sent to Mr. David B. Muna at dmuna@mymarianas.com or faxed to +1-670-664-3237, **no later than 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on March 15, 2018.**

/s/ Gloria C. Cavanagh
Chairperson, Board of Directors

/s/ Christopher A. Concepcion
Managing Director

Board of Trustees
Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
1 Lower Navy Hill Road Navy Hill, Saipan, MP 96950

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9911, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation hereby gives notice that a Special meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Wednesday, March 7, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the CEO's Conference 3 located at the Administrative Offices (new wing).

CHCC Board of Trustees Special Meeting
Wednesday, March 7, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Approval of Agenda
IV. Approval of Minutes:
A. January 11, 2018 Executive Meeting
B. January 18, 2018 Regular Meeting
C. January 23, 2018 Executive Meeting
D. January 29, 2018 Executive Session and Regular Meeting

V. The Board may vote to meet in Executive Session to consult with legal counsel on pending and anticipated legal matters.
VI. Public Comments
VII. New Business:
A. Presentation of Solar Panel
VIII. Old Business:
A. To vote and approve the CHCC 2019 Proposed Budget
IX. Announcements
X. Adjournment

P.O. Box 500409 CK, Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone: (670) 236-8201/2 Fax: (670) 233-8756

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

REGULAR BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority hereby gives notice that a **Regular Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on **Friday, March 9, 2018, at 9:00 a.m.** in the MVA Conference Room, San Jose Professional Building Saipan, MP 96950.

MEETING AGENDA

1) **Preliminary Matters**
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes
a. Regular Board Meeting - January 26, 2018
2) **Public Comments**
3) **Committee Reports**
1. Finance –
a. Fund Status Report – February 2018
4) **New Business**
1. FY 2019 Budget Submission to the Office of Management and Budget
2. Request for Proposal (RFP) for Tourist Exit Survey
5) **Old Business**
1. MVA Off-Shore Office Contract Renewal
6) **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
7) **Executive Session**
8) **Adjournment**

/s/ Gloria Cavanagh
Chairwoman, MVA Board of Directors

MARCH ON

AK SINCE 1914 SIGNATURE USED CARS

BROWSE OUR INVENTORY AT AKSAIPAN.COM

MANAGER'S SPECIALS

2015 Prius C, Hatchback
Mileage 25,856, 4-cyl, Auto, Blue, STK#U17-090L
WAS $15,999*
NOW $14,299*

2012 Sienna LE
Mileage 35,318, 4-cyl, Auto, FWD, Red, STK#U17-092T
WAS $22,799*
NOW $18,199*

2015 Prius HV, 4-Dr Hatchback
4-cyl, Auto, FWD, Silver, STK#U17-102R
WAS $21,999*
NOW $19,399*

2014 Tacoma DC
4x4, V6, Auto, Red, STK#U17-111T
WAS $30,599*
NOW $26,999*

2015 Toyota Sienna LE
Mileage 12,665, 8-pax Van, Red, 6-Cyl, STK#U17-050R
WAS $34,499*
NOW $28,699*

2012 4Runner Trail Edition
Mileage 30,438, V6, Auto, 4WD, Gray, STK#U17-096P
WAS $34,899*
NOW $30,899*

2012 Nissan JUKE S
SUB, 4-Door, Auto, 2W, White, Mileage 42,986, STK#U18-007T
NOW $10,699*

LIKE BRAND NEW QUALITY USED CARS BEST PRICES ON ISLAND

2014 Toyota Yaris, FWD
FWD, Auto, Gray, STK#U17-003F
NOW $14,999*

2007 FJ Cruiser
SUV, V-6, Manual, 6-spd, 4WD, Red, STK#U17-133T
WAS $17,599*
NOW $15,799*

2017 Yaris Hatchback
4-Door, 4-cyl, Auto, FWD, Gray, STK#R17-026F
WAS $17,399*
NOW $16,599*

2016 Prius C
4-cyl, Auto, White, STK#U17-136L
NOW $16,999*

2017 Yaris L Hatchback
4-cyl, Auto, FWD, Red/Black, STK#R17-028F
NOW $16,999
NOW $16,999*

2016 Corolla LE
FWD, Auto, 4DR Sedan, Red, STK#R18-006F
NOW $18,699*

2016 Corolla LE 4-DR sedan
4-cyl, Auto, FWD, Green, Mileage 28,773, STK#R18-004F
NOW $18,999*

2013 Highlander
4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, Silver, Mileage 28,k257, STK#U18-006T
NOW $19,199*

2015 RAV4 LE
AWD, Auto, Black, STK#R18-001B
NOW $19,599*

2017 Corolla LE
4-cyl, Auto, FWD, Red, Fully loaded with Alarm, Pro-Coat, & Backup Sensor, #R18-002F
NOW $20,899*

2016 Tacoma Access Cab Pre-Runner
SR, 4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, White, STK#U17-129L
WAS $24,199*
NOW $23,199*

2016 Tacoma Access Cab Pre-Runner
SR, 4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, White, STK#U17-130L
WAS $24,999*
NOW $23,999*

2015 Highlander LE Sport
4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, Pearl White, STK#U17-135P
WAS $29,399*
NOW $26,399*

2014 Tacoma 2WD, DC
4-cyl, Auto, Gray, STK#U17-139T
NOW $26,899*

2015 Tacoma Double Cab
4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, Black, STK#U17-132T
NOW $26,999*

2013 4Runner SR5
4WD, V-6, Auto, Red, STK#U17-134T
NOW $27,699*

2016 Highlander LE Sport
4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, Gray, STK#R17-025F
WAS $30,799*
NOW $27,899*

2016 Highlander LE SUV
4-Cyl, Auto, 2WD, Silver, STK#U17-109R
WAS $30,229*
NOW $27,999*

2016 Highlander LE SUV
4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, Blue, STK#U17-116R
WAS $30,599*
NOW $28,199*

2016 Highlander LE SUV
4-Cyl, Auto, 2WD, Silver, STK#U17-108R
WAS $30,599*
NOW $28,199*

2014 Tacoma Double Cab
4WD, V6, White, STK#U17-128L
WAS $31,399*
NOW $28,699*

2017 Tacoma Double Cab SR
4-cyl, Auto, 2WD, White, Mileage 7,003, STK#R18-008F
NOW $30,999*

*On approved credit. Conditions apply. See dealer for details. Fees not included. Mileage may vary.

LARGEST Used Car Inventory on island! CHECK OUT OUR NEW LISTING OF USED CARS AT www.AKsaipan.com. VISIT US TODAY!

AK SINCE 1914 Atkins Kroll (Saipan), Inc.
#1 Chalan Msr Guerrero San Jose
Saipan, MP 96950

Call 234-5911
Showroom Hours: Monday to Friday 8 am to 5 pm
Saturday Hours 8 am to 5 pm

SEE YOUR AK APPROVAL EXPERTS

HERE FOR SAIPAN. HERE FOR LIFE. Browse our online showroom - Visit: www.AKsaipan.com

More than $3.5K up for grabs at Saipan Chamber golf tourney

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament is looking to bring some fun to the golf course with a two-person scramble format.

Men and women of different skill levels and talents all have a chance at some amazing cash prizes—first place, $800; second place, $500; and third place, $300—for each of the two categories: Team Gross and Team Double Peoria.

There will also be cash prizes for closest-to-the-pin, longest drive, and accurate drive contests.

In addition to these prizes, golfers will enjoy complimentary swag bags courtesy of chamber members as well as on-course snacks and refreshments. The tournament is slated for April 14, 2018. Showtime is at 6am, with a shotgun start at 7am. The registration fee is $130 per person. Chamber members will enjoy a discounted fee of $120 per member. A banquet and raffle will immediately follow the close of the tournament.

The funds raised by the tournament and raffle will support the chamber's scholarship program, monthly training seminars, and other community based projects. Among the activities offered in 2017 were:

■ Chamber scholarships:

■ $8,000 scholarships to high school seniors,

■ $2,000 scholarship to an Northern Marianas College student

■ $2,000 scholarship to a vocational education student.

■ Annual Career Exploration Day: More than 80 public and private high school students experienced working in the private sector for a day.

■ · Veteran Cemetery improvements

■ Saipan Young Professionals 2017 Toys 4 Tots Program: Over $2,000 and 2,000 toys collected for less fortunate children

■ And more…

Raffle prizes have been donated and tickets will be available for purchase during the awards banquet at the end of the tournament.

Sponsorships and raffle prizes are currently being collected and we expect this will be the most exciting year yet.

Registration forms for players are available for download at www.saipanchamber.com, at the chamber office, and at Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

If you would like more information about our event or our organization, visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/saipanchamber or contact Mercilynn Kaneshi Palec at 234-7150 or administrator@saipanchamber.com. ***(PR)***

Team Falcons bag top places at PGFC

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Green Meadow School participants in the Primary Grade Forensic Competition regional at the Grace Christian Academy last March 3, 2018.

Green Meadow School third-grader Jonathan Borja could not help but shout, "We did it," after winning first place in the choral speaking event for the grades 3-5 division of the Primary Grade Forensic Competition regional at the Grace Christian Academy last March 3, 2018.

Although she was in Guam to accompany the school's spelling bee representatives, GMS president/principal Milagros Songcuan congratulated the winners and all those who participated, adding that everyone were already considered winners because they qualified for the regional.

After four months of competing with other private and public schools, the best among the best had to battle the last time to be awarded the top five places for the following categories: Dramatic Interpretation, Duo Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, Reader's Forum, Choral Speaking, and Impromptu in the K-2 and 3-5 Division.

GMS Falcons who qualified from the Kindergarten 5 up to 5th grade from Chalan Kiya and Gualo Rai outdid themselves at the competition. with the mentorship of their coaches: Meliza Umali, Elvie Armea, Analyn Danan, Zenaida Marcelo, Bona Angeles, Analiza Quiambao, Jason Aia, and Rosalie Habijan.

The Falcons were able to bag the top places in most of the categories in each division. With every snack and lunch time, even after-school, the Falcons and their coaches practiced, hoping to bring honor and glory to their parents and the school.

K-2

CHORAL SPEAKING:

1st place: Nicole Acaba, Isabella Mallari, Alexia Rubia, Rochelle de Leon, Rihanna de Leon (2nd grade)

2nd place: Rhett Garth Agbayani, Angelo Larin, Jericho Hinolan, Sander Guerzon, Christopher Sablan (2nd grade)

5th place-: Shawn Philipp Montoya, Jon Trevor Ortiz, Jiro Hedrick Quindoza, Benjie Escano Jr. (Kindergarten-5)

DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION:

1st place: Nicole Acaba (2nd grade)

2nd place: Greatshen Martin (Kinder-5)

READER'S FORUM:

1st place: Rhett Garth Agbayani (2nd grade

DUO INTERPRETATION:

2nd place: Jericho Hinolan and Alexia Rubia (2nd grade)

3rd place: Isabella Mallari and Rochelle De Leon (2nd grade)

4th place: Kyle Ladia and Paul Bernardo (1st grade)

HUMOROUS INTERPRETATION:

1st place: Nirvana Krisles Elena Wolf (Kinder-5)

3-5 DIVISION

CHORAL SPEAKING:

1st place: Jonathan Borja, Cody Ryan Santos, Carly Kate dela Cruz, Jealexiz Torres, Tristan Yanto

2nd place: Solana Arro Hunter, Carmelo Guiller Banzagale, Samuel Lino Cabrera, Samantha Mangalinao, Chris Vecina (5th grade)

5th place: Anna Julia Dalusung, Vimarie Alfeche, Paula Bernardo, Kaitlyn Drilon, Iyanah Ranin

DUO INTERPRETATION:

2nd place: Nelson Isaac Acaba and Samuel Lino Cabrera (5th grade)

3rd place: Jake Regalado and Edsel Hinolan (4th grade)

5th place: Louise Manansala and Tristhony Duarte (3rd grade)

DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION:

4th place: Chedlen Rose Villanueva (3rd grade)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 6, 2000

Consortium opposes revival of 80-MW power project

An attempt by lawmakers to restore the mothballed 80-megawatt Saipan power project is courting yet stiff opposition as at least two leading bidders have urged Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio to veto their measure due to questions on a provision that could eliminate competition. The consortium of Tomen, Singapore Power, Alsons and Tan Holdings Corp. wrote a letter to the governor to lobby against passage of Senate Bill 12-19 which is pending before his office for approval. The move followed similar action by Saipan Power Partners/Hawaiian Electric Inc. which appealed last week to Mr. Tenorio to junk the legislation it viewed as favoring front-runner Enron over the others despite it having a "more costly" bid.

NMI gets less fed grants than other US territories

The Northern Marianas government receives less federal funds than any other U.S. insular areas and has the lowest per capita in terms of the amount granted by Washington, according to the governor's press office. In a statement released Friday, it said the CNMI generated more revenues from local sources with 91.5 percent of its operational cost and other expenditures in 1997 coming from its own income. In contrast, Guam had a percentage of 83 percent; Puerto Rico, 74 percent; Palau, 59 percent, Marshall Islands, 39 percent; FSM, 38 percent; and Virgin Islands, 81 percent.

March 6, 2006

MVA insists autonomy on travels

The Marianas Visitors Authority has approved a travel authorization for one of its personnel to Chuuk without the consent of the Executive Branch. In a Jan. 16, 2006, memorandum to department heads, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has prohibited all government departments and activities from using public funds for travels. If travels are deemed extremely important, the governor required concerned offices to seek approval from him. Following Guerrero's inquiry on the MVA board's legal standing to approve a TA, MVA legal counsel Erick Smith also opined that the agency does not have to comply with the order "because it is not directed at us." Smith said that MVA is neither a department or an activity.

CPA awaits news from Air Saipan

The Ports Authority has not received any update regarding the planned charter services by Air Saipan. Lee Cabrera, Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director, said the company has yet to reply to the government since late last week. The company reportedly planned on chartering a Boeing 757 aircraft from U.S.-based Ryan International Airlines. Air Saipan aims to provide charter services between Japan and Saipan and later to other markets, including South Korea, China, Hong Kong and even Australia. Air Saipan's stakeholders placed the company's initial investment at $3 million.

March 6, 2009

BOE urges IR teachers, staff to apply for immigrant status

The chairperson of the CNMI Board of Education is urging all Public School System employees with immediate relative, or IR, status to process their papers now so they could be granted immigrant status and qualify to stay within the system. Lucy Blanco-Maratita told Saipan Tribune this, following concerns raised by school administrators that the anticipated enforcement of federalization in June may affect their personnel, including classroom teachers. PSS earlier disclosed that there are 96 personnel who fall under the IR category. Many of them have been employed with the system for several years. They include teachers, support staff, and teacher-aides, and assistants. Although the issue hasn't gone up to the board yet, Blanco-Maratita said that Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan is aware and is now assessing the matter.

$60M-$80M hotel breaks ground

The $60 million to $80 million Flame Sako Resort and Spa yesterday began construction on a 109,003-square meter area in As Matuis, at a time when many businesses have been closing or reducing operations due to the local and global economic turmoil. Fitial said the CNMI is grateful for Flame Sako's confidence in the local market, and the government stands by this investment commitment. The governor urged all permitting and regulatory agencies to expedite the processing of permits to complete the project. The Legislature approved on Feb. 4 Flame Sako's land lease agreement with the Department of Public Lands.

Signboard seeks to inspire chuckles as you pass by

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The messages posted on the Marianas Eye Institute signboard every month is always a source of laughter, joy, and encouragement, no matter what the signs of the times are.

The institute's CEO, Russ Quinn, said that putting up humorous messages on their signboard started three years ago.

"In the early days, we used to throw a lot of our marketing materials on the signboard, but I don't think anybody ever looked at it because it was all advertising. Then three years ago, I saw a sign that cracked me up so I put it up—'The boss told me to change the sign so I did,'" he said.

That was the start of something unexpected.

"We got many reviews from that and people were asking if that was really our worker that put that up and I was like, yes and I used it a couple of back and forth because it's really funny. People told me about it and I thought that's cool to know that people like to look and read at our sign," he added.

Being intentional about the messages they put up on the signboard began after Soudelor.

"After Soudelor happened, the island needed an upper as there was damage and destruction everywhere. Our sign was completely torn apart except for the center section where I can put a message up. That was the only thing that remained and I thought I put up a sign that said, 'Stay strong Saipan we can get through this together,'" he said.

"Then we started getting feedback from the community and they were thankful for such a great encouraging thing. From then on, we changed it a couple of times where we would say 'Let's show the world what a great community Saipan is' and things like that," he added.

The more the community responded to their signs, the more MEI became engaged and asked people for suggestions.

"I put up Helen Keller sayings and everyone was just giving me good feedback on that…For Christmas and New Year, we put up a holiday greeting or add a message to whatever is going on. If there is a sporting event on island, we put up 'Good luck, Tagaman,'" he said.

BEA CABRERA

"I get people that call me and tell me 'Oh I got ideas!' The one sign that's currently up there was contributed by a 13-year-old girl that sent me a message and I said, this one is funny and that's going to go to next month's sign." said Russ Quinn CEO of Marianas Eye Institute.

"I get people that call me and tell me 'Oh I got ideas!' The one sign that's currently up there was contributed by a 13-year-old girl that sent me a message and I said, this one is funny and that's going to go to next month's sign," he added.

Quinn said that MEI is serious with its work as an eye-care center but humor finds its way into their everyday operations.

"We have two doctors, Dr. Williams, an ophthalmologist and he does the surgery on the eyes and does the treatment for cataracts and diabetic retinopathy and those kinds of services. We have Dr. Robertson who is an optometrist who does treatment of disease for diabetic retinopathy, but he also does and provides prescription glasses and a lot of other medical referral services to our ophthalmologist," he said.

"We also have a very fun crew here so we kind of portray that in the community as well," he added.

The interview inspired Quinn to come up with a promo that will give back some benefit to the community for their continued patronage of MEI and support their signs.

"I want to offer a contest to the community. Say for anybody that can submit a sign to me and through our website (www.marianaseye.com) a funny or inspiring quote and we use their message for the month, I'll give them a 50-percent discount on a pair of sunglasses. If we use your sign, we will happily give them a great discount on a pair of sunglasses in the shop," he said.

"Everyone is just giving me good feedback on the signs… it just became this thing where people were like 'when are you going to change your sign?' 'We have a suggestion for your sign,'" he added.

Expect more messages in the future as the MEI signboard has become more than just letters and words.

"I've had a mother tell me that her daughter is homesick for Saipan while in college in the states. Her daughter asked her to take a photo of the MEI sign because that always makes her feel good. That to me was like 'wow' and it turned out to be something I've never expected it to be. People now look forward to what the next sign is going to say," he said.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Military training at Warning Area 12

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training at Warning Area 12 during the following dates and times:

- March 8, from 7am to 7pm
- March 9, from 7am to 6pm
- March 10, from 6am to 6pm
- March 11, from 6am to 4pm

It is recommended the public, fishermen, and marine tour operators monitor the Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories. W-12 begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. ***(PR)***

Women's Month events

In celebration of CNMI Women's Month, the public is invited to attend the following free events this week**:**

- **Tuesday, March 6:** Financial literacy presentation at Dandan Middle School (PTSA), 6pm
- **March 7, Wednesday:** Storytelling on cultural practices at the Carolinian Affairs Office grounds, 9am - 11am
- **March 8, Thursday:** Parenting tips at KKMP radio, 7:30am
- **March 8, Thursday:** Women arts & crafts at Thursday Street Market, Garapan Fishing Base, 5pm
- **March 9, Friday:** Oral health presentation, Garapan Community Development Center (next to the Carolinian Affairs Office), 1:30pm

To schedule a free oral health exam between March 5-15, 2018, females 16 years old and older may call the Commonwealth Health Center Dental Clinic at 236-8369 to make a 1pm-3pm appointment.

- **March 9, Friday:** NMC-CDI Computer Tech Hour, Bldg. W, Northern Marianas College, 5pm-7pm. ***(PR)***

Free seminar on business plan

The CNMI Small Business Development Center will be offering a free business seminar called "How to Write a Business Plan" at the Commonwealth Development Authority boardroom on Wednesday, March 7, 2018 from 8:30am to 10am. It will be presented by Nicole Babauta, director/business adviser, CNMI SBDC. To register, contact the CNMI SBDC office at 664-3018 or visit http://pisbdcn.ecenterdirect.com/events. ***(PR)***

OPA ethics presentation on Rota, Tinian

The Office of the Public Auditor will be conducting ethics presentations on Tinian on March 9, 2018, at the Northern Marianas College Tinian Instructional Site, Room D. There will be a morning and afternoon session at 10am and 2pm. If an agency or group of government employees are interested in the presentation, contact the OPA at telephone number (670)322-6481/2. The OPA staff will also be notarizing and accepting filings of financial disclosure statements from government officials. All filers are reminded to bring with them some form of photo identification, such as a driver's license or a passport. Failure to do so may result in the denial of notary services. ***(OPA)***

Emergency water outage yesterday

There was an emergency water service interruption for Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in San Antonio, Chalan Piao, Susupe, Chalan Kanoa and San Jose yesterday, from 10am to 12pm.

The water service interruption was necessary to repair a leaking valve on As Perdido Road (Texas Road leading to the William S. Reyes Elementary School), which was reported to the CUC call center on Sunday, March 4, 2018.

Water operations personnel worked on the eastbound lane of As Perdido Road.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates. ***(CUC)***

USCIS' Mathur at SHRM meeting

The Society for Human Resource Management-CNMI Chapter will be holding a special meeting on Thursday, March 8, featuring Kamana Mathur of USCIS Pacific District, who will speak about the Form I-9 process. The SHRM meeting will be held at the PIC's Charley's, from 11:30am to 2pm. The presentation includes the PIC lunch buffet at the cost of $20 for SHRM members and $30 for non-members. Reserve your seat by contacting Penny Jones by e-mail at penelope.jones@hyatt.com or Denise Montenegro at denise.montenegro@hyatt.com or by telephone at 323-5867/68. ***(SHRM)***

Sewer odor in Sadog Tasi, Puerto Rico, Lower Base, Garapan

There will be a sewage odor in the Sadog Tasi, Puerto Rico, Lower Base, and Garapan areas until March 30, 2018. The Sadog Tasi Treatment Plant personnel will be removing accumulated sludge from the treatment plant site and hauling it to the landfill starting March 1, 2018, and continuing intermittently until March 30, 2018. Strong odor is expected as the pile is disturbed for transport and may persist until sludge removal is completed.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates. ***(PR)***

Survivors, caregivers support meeting on Thursday

All people facing cancer, their family members, and caregivers are invited to the next Commonwealth Cancer Association support meeting on Thursday, March 8, 2018, starting at 5:30pm at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Chamolinian Room. Guest speaker will be Helen C. Sablan, director, Medicaid Program, CHCC. To RSVP or for more information, call the CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Military training at Warning Area 517, FDM

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training at Warning Area 517 during the following dates and times:

- March 6, 7pm
- March 8, from 7am to 7pm
- March 9, from 7am to 6pm
- March 10, from 6am to 6pm
- March 11, from 6am to 4pm

The military will also conduct training at the island of Farallon de Medinilla during the following dates and times:

- March 6, from 7am to 7:30pm
- March 7-8, from 11am to 7:30pm
- March 9, from 10am to noon

It is recommended the public, fishermen and marine tour operators monitor the Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories.

W-517 is activated south of latitude 12° 40' 00"N. Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Banks are open for public use.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla will be in a 12-nautical mile radius of the island. ***(PR)***

Free USCIS workshop at Saipan library on March 8

Officers from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will present a free event on March 8 at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, starting at 5pm. They'll present a one-hour workshop covering immigration and the naturalization process. The public is invited to attend. This session is part of a larger USCIS initiative to help immigrants better understand the many services available. For more information, contact Sharon Rummery at (415) 248-8873. ***(PR)***

Free business seminar for veterans & spouses

The CNMI Military/Veteran's Affairs Office and the Small Business Development Center will be offering a free business seminar called "Reboot to Business" at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's Azucena Room on March 26, from 9am to 4pm, presented by Dennis Kwak, director, Veterans Business Outreach Center of the Pacific. To register, contact Velma Del Rosario at 664-2650 or visit https://sbavets.force.com/s/. ***(PR)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXVIII, Issue No. 45

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Actually, trade wars are bad and impossible to win

It's always dangerous to say that Donald Trump has set a new low for presidential discourse, because he sets new lows with dreary regularity. Nonetheless, his heedless declaration that "trade wars are good, and easy to win" deserves special recognition.

No president should need to be told that trade wars are, in fact, bad and impossible to win. By imposing new tariffs on steel and aluminum, Trump has embarked on a policy that is a clear and present danger to U.S. jobs and living standards.

The tariffs are indefensible on their face. They'll raise prices for U.S. consumers and put U.S. companies at a serious disadvantage in export markets. There's no need to go over this ground again: None of the rationales that have been offered in their defense makes sense.

Yet boasting about how easy it is to win a trade war tops almost everything. It adds an element of historical and strategic obliviousness to the administration's economic incompetence.

America's allies and trading partners—including Japan, Canada, Australia, and the European Union—are dismayed. If they aren't exempted, they'll feel compelled to retaliate against the U.S. action, just as the U.S. would retaliate against a unilateral rule-bending act of outright protection against its own producers. The administration will then feel pressure to retaliate against the retaliation. After all, it now has to show that trade wars are "easy to win." A self-defeating spiral of this kind is actually the definition of "trade war."

One of the biggest risks of the Trump presidency has always been the harm it might do to the U.S. and global economies through a reckless approach to trade. Norms and institutions have been built over decades to support international cooperation through commerce. The U.S., far from being disadvantaged by this system of liberal trade, has profited enormously. The new tariffs, and the preposterous comments offered in their defense, suggest that Trump wasn't bluffing: He really does want to tear this system down.

The last time this happened was during the 1930s. The Smoot-Hawley tariffs and the retaliation they provoked contributed to the Great Depression and the collapse of the world economy. Mr. President, what exactly was good about that trade war?

(c)2018 *Bloomberg News*

The violence of guns is real; so is our fascination with them

By MARY SANCHEZ
The Kansas City Star

Mary Sanchez is an opinion-page columnist for The Kansas City Star. *Readers may write to her at: Kansas City Star, 1729 Grand Blvd., Kansas City, Mo. 64108-1413, or via email at msanchez@kcstar.com.*

If you're giddily telling yourself that the National Rifle Association's stranglehold on gun reform is finally coming to an end, think again.

Yes, Wayne LaPierre and the gun rights group he leads appeared out of step and hard-hearted in the national dialogue that followed the mass school shooting in Parkland, Fla., on Valentine's Day.

Yes, corporations have ditched discount programs and other association with the NRA. Dick's Sporting Goods will cease selling assault-style weapons like the one used to murder 17 students and staff in Parkland. Even Walmart has bent to public outcry and raised the age limit for firearm sales to 21.

It all feels so positive. The groundswell of protest and response gives hope that this time we'll finally see action that will make America safer from gun violence.

But rest assured that LaPierre is not quaking. His organization has barely been nicked, and he understands the grip that guns have on America.

Guns are deeply imbedded in the American psyche, tied to historic legacies both mythical and real. From our early childhoods on, guns are a staple of our media entertainment and the games we play.

Our attitudes are not captured very accurately by gun ownership data. Many people who don't own guns have positive feelings about them, even strongly held ones, based on their beliefs about individual rights. And gun affinities are also influenced by family and peer groups. You may not know how to shoot a gun, but you may also fondly recall stories of your great-grandfather's mastery as a hunter.

In fact, "relationship" is a theme of a recent assessment of gun ownership and attitudes in America that we'd all do well to acquaint ourselves with. "America's Complex Relationship with Guns: An In-Depth Look at the Attitudes and Experiences of U.S. Adults" was released by Pew Research Center last June. Here's what it found:

"Americans have broad exposure to guns, whether they personally own one or not. At least two-thirds have lived in a household with a gun at some point in their lives. And roughly seven in 10—including 55 percent of those who have never personally owned a gun—say they have fired a gun at some point. Today, three in 10 U.S. adults say they own a gun, and an additional 36 percent say that while they don't own one now, they might be open to owning a gun in the future."

There. In fewer than 100 words, you have read why the "gun debate" is often not a debate at all. Because well-meaning efforts to change how Americans buy, trade and possess their firearms often fail to take into account how firearms resonate to even non-gun owners.

The report goes on: "A third of adults say they don't currently own a gun and can't see themselves ever doing so."

A third of the population is far from the majority. The pathway to a safer America—one that respects the Second Amendment but also respects society's need to be safe from guns—will not be dictated by that one-third of Americans who cannot fathom owning a gun.

Any workable consensus on gun control must include at least some Americans who either own guns or who would consider doing so. And that describes a whole lot of America.

It's also worth considering that two-thirds of gun owners cited protection as a top reason for owning a gun. That explains why many continue to believe that arming teachers—a notion that teachers widely oppose—is a rational response to school shootings.

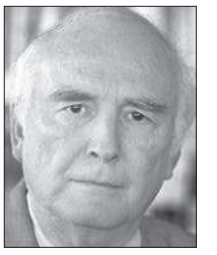
We all want to protect schools, churches and other public spaces from attack. And if you see a gun as a primary way of doing that, then it's not really a leap to want to arm more people, however flawed the idea is in other practical ways.

Attitudes about guns are deeply held, and it's not clear how easily they are altered by awful acts of violence, regardless of how high the body counts are or how long they remain in the headlines. The murder of 14 students and three faculty of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School has had a more profound impact on the national conscience than most school shootings, thank God.

If we are to find a way forward on gun violence in America, we have to understand and respect the realities both of the violence and of the attitudes and beliefs of our fellow citizens.

Businesses lead the way on sane gun policies

By DAN K. THOMASSON
Tribune News Service



Dan Thomasson is an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service *and a former vice president of Scripps Howard Newspapers. Readers may send him email at thomassondan@aol.com.*

WASHINGTON—If Donald Trump is confused about what he needs to do in the face of a sudden push by business to establish its own gun restrictions, it might be a good idea to ask his vice president. Not that Mike Pence has any particular record on firearm restrictions. To the contrary, he has been strongly pro-guns.

What he does know something about is when American capitalism finds itself finally caught between long-term profits and the good will and moral anger of those who buy its products. This, of course, is exactly what has happened in the decisions of companies to take their own steps in cutting off the sale of battlefield weapons and upping the age of purchasers of any firearm to at least 21. All this following the latest school shooting that killed 17 in Florida.

Symbolic or not in the immediate effect, these corporate moves are an important first step to gun control and the National Rifle Association, bluster or not knows it.

A few years ago Pence, as governor of Indiana, blithely signed a putrid act of discrimination that clearly was aimed at denying rights to those who practiced a lifestyle not in accordance with Republican and conservative standards—the LGBTG community. The problem for Pence was that his capitol city of Indianapolis was about to host the NCAA's Final Four.

What occurred next was an outpouring of anger from providers, concessionaires and advertisers and a great many of the state's voters who began having questions about Pence, hurting his chances for re-election and beyond. The act was repealed only a few days later.

While the decision of Walmart, the nation's largest gunseller, and Dick's Sporting Goods and others, is not expect to curtail guns (which are mainly sold by licensed dealers and in private trades) it is a start in a long crusade toward common sense that just might ultimately keep weapons away from the mentally unstable.

Actually, gun ownership has declined since 1977, when 54 percent of American households owned a firearm. A major problem, however, has been the availability of semi-automatic weapons, like the ARs and other automatics. Dick's officials said they could no longer in good conscience sell the weapon after hearing the cries for help from youngsters who saw their fellow students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., felled in the mass shooting.

Trump seems at odds with what should be done to stop the carnage in schools and other institutions. While retail decisions by major companies are a way to bring about eventual change, they take time. National Rifle Association backers, with numbers of members in the millions and very deep pockets responded to Dick's without much concern. Perhaps they should talk to Pence, too.

The largest threat to inaction would be another Parkland-like shooting, carried out even with warning as this massacre was, to truly lessen the Second Amendment's stranglehold on the Constitution, even over the First Amendment, which is our true bedrock of freedom. The First seems always to be vulnerable to interpretation while the Second hides behind a wall of promised mayhem if any alteration is threatened. Balderdash.

There is a list of actions the length of an M-1 rifle that can be done to put the irrelevant Second carefully back in its holster or scabbard without depriving Americans of their right to bear arms unless they are deliberately intent on taking the lives of their innocent fellow citizens. It is proper to ask American business and the quaking Congress to break through the intimidation of money and fear that surrounds the sanctity of this misanthropic addition to our 1787 Constitution?

Someone will have to stand up and shout, "Enough!"

Why not American business? Who stands to lose more than those who keep our economy growing? Think of the young men and women who have died or been wounded in a school room. They will be the buyers, lenders and rainmakers if some nut doesn't pull a trigger.

Pence got the message and backed down. He was lucky to get the thankless vice president's position. Want to be recognized as a strong president, lawmaker or corporate director? Don't dilly, dally. Do something for the innocent. Make yourselves feel better.

Penny Stocks and Punny Stickers

Short satiric sonnets on it, thanks Forrest Gump

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired teacher and poet living on Tinian who taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

Truly Ugly Thug Bumper Snickers

T.rumps Daily Tweets Filled With Flaws
R.ussian Oligarchs Watch Wall St. Tickers
U.nimpeachable Prez Grasping and Groping
L.ife is Like A Bunch of Cabinet Candy
Y.ou Never Know What Your Gonna Vet
U.nbelievably Understands Less Than More
G.ump said, " Stupid Is As Stupid Does "
L.ies Are A Russian Road To Ruble Riches
Y.ou Now See Gumpism Discern Trumpism
T.o Obstruct Justice Obtain Rubles
H.is Lies Another Road To Perdition
U.nteachable Unreachable Unimpeachable
G.ump repeated," Stupid Is As Stupid Does "
D.onald Loves Russian Quacker Hackers
T.rump Thrives On Swamp Drained Backers

45 Ltd: Limited Top Development

(A very limited individual selling penny stock at $.14 cents a share, free ruble exchange)
Long Term Denial
Lacking Determined Thought
Liars Trolling Democrats
Losing Touch Diabolically
Liking Tweet Deconstruction
Loathing Towards D.C.
Laughable Total Demagogue
Latent Tantrum Disaster
Loco Tweetos Diabolico
Large Tweeting Demon
Looney Tune Ducksasshairstyle
Lusting Tape Denier
Legal Team Destruction
Labeled Totally Dysfunctional

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Medical lack of care

For the past two weeks my wife has been ill. Her symptoms included dizziness, lack of vision, headaches, the urge to vomit, sleeplessness, and being startled by loud noises.

Although I know a little about treatment options, this was out of my league and we called a local healthcare facility to evaluate my wife's condition. We arrived on time and saw the doctor within 20 minutes—an acceptable waiting period.

Halfway through my wife's examination, the doctor had to stop in order to rush to the hospital. He said he would see us the following day. His nurse gave us an appointment time of 10:30.

At 10:30 sharp we were at the doctor's office and signed in. The reception area was so jammed that someone considerately changed their seat so that my wife and I could sit together. My wife, still feeling nauseous, went to the bathroom several times.

I told the people at the desk that my wife was in significant distress and that if the doctor could possibly see her quickly, it would be greatly appreciated.

I learned an important lesson about this healthcare facility: they don't care. What they mostly care about is money and more patients.

I went to the desk and, as a former New Yorker, I had had it. I started yelling, and everyone in the reception area heard me: "What's the point of having an appointment if we have to wait two hours? I'll tell you why! Because nobody here *cares*! You knew my wife was suffering but your attitude seems to be, 'Ho hum, let her wait…'"

What I said was true: they *don't* care.

The director of the facility came out and told me to stop yelling, which I did. But, frankly, I was happy that all of the patients in the reception area heard me. I probably gave voice to some of their frustrations also.

More than two hours after our arrival, the doctor saw my wife. I wisely decided to remain in the reception area, because I was still steamed at his arrogant lack of concern.

In the end, all the doctor did was to give my wife a prescription for a mild painkiller (which requires no prescription). So it was a morning wasted, for a useless treatment, by a dismissive doctor.

That said, we have had great success with another, wonderful clinic. We were seen almost immediately, the doctors listened attentively, and offered either helpful suggestions or a prescription for a medication that will actually do some good.

The only reason we went to the first facility was that my wife knew the doctor personally and erroneously believed that he would treat her quickly, with compassion and competence. But such was not the case.

So we are back to square one, sort of. We will go to the "caring" healthcare facility next week. The doctor we will see will listen attentively, arrive at a diagnosis, and perhaps prescribe something to help my wife.

It is obvious that I did not mention the names of these facilities, nor of the physicians. But you may be able to figure them out for yourself. Ask yourself, when did you last have to wait two hours to be seen?

Thank goodness there are physicians of integrity on this island and who perform their medical duties with kindness and competence.

While I'm at it, I want to praise CHCC's emergency department and the fine physicians and support staff who work there, especially George Macris, M.D. He cared, and he got me back on my feet in a day.

Russ Mason
As Teo, Saipan

The Ides of March

As we try to size up President Donald Trump and his administration, let's look at the pros and cons. The negatives far outweigh the positives thusly: He is an advocate for sexual assaults, taking the side of the perpetrator over the victim, has cheated on his wives through extramarital affairs, lying virtually every day, making comments using vulgarity he knows will create controversy, thereby creating divisiveness among voters, and he can't understand why so many people are anti-Trump and disrespectful.

I have read letters saying the president deserves respect and the office of the president should be respected. Well, many of us respect the office but not the current occupant. When President Trump shows respect for American voters we might reciprocate.

Between the Russia investigation and his latest silence on the school shootings in Florida again shows the negatives far outweigh the positives. Yes, the economy remains strong and immigration rules have been tightened. His weak leadership and scatter-shot thinking has the free world both laughing and fearful of what this overgrown bully will come up with next. He can be best described as dangerous for our wellbeing by his erratic behavior and actions, all of which are done for his personal gratification. No matter how hard he tries to sell his "I love America," "I love our military," it all adds up to "I love me!" I haven't even mentioned his rolling back regulations that protect clean air, clean water, healthcare, senior care, food, unnecessary offshore drilling for oil and delusion of "clean coal!"

The Ides of March are upon you, Mr. President and Congress. The coming 2018 elections may be the most important life-or-death decision voters ever have to make to survive this evil empire.

I am of the opinion impeachment would be a good start to put this great nation back on track.

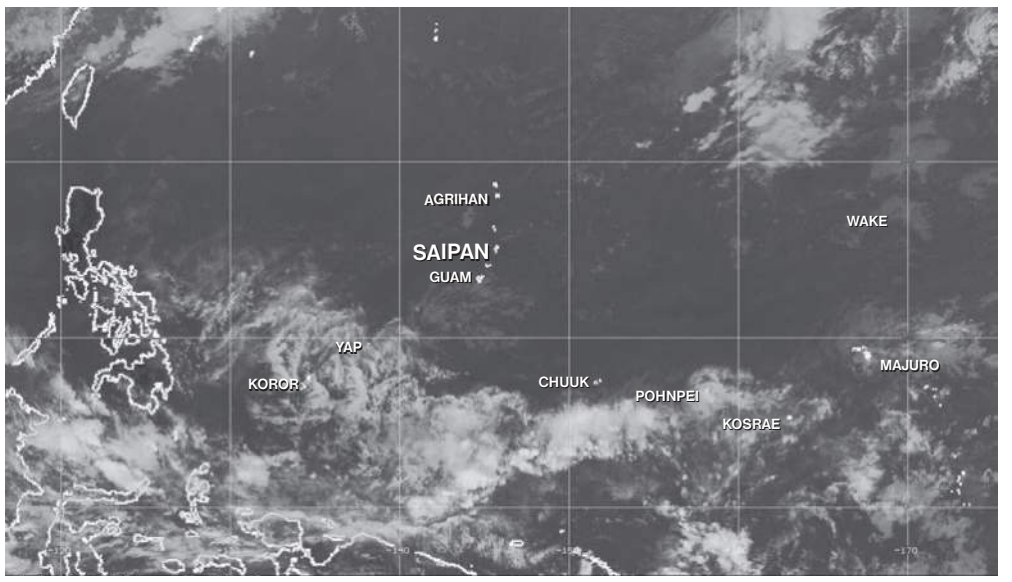
Herb Stark
Mooresville, NC

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly sunny with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy. A slight chance of showers.
▲89° ▼76°	▲89° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:23 AM, MONDAY, MARCH 5, 2018
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Although the long term narrative remains focused on the ongoing dry season pattern, the short term forecast will be a little wetter due to the trade disturbance on Guam and Rota`s eastern doorstep. This system will move through the area today bringing some much-needed rainfall. However, showers will not have sufficient duration to really mitigate the fire danger. Once this disturbance passes by, showers diminish and models really decrease the moisture, showing less than a half inch over the next 10 days. As a result, 10 POPs later in the week may be a little high. Other than dry trades over the next week, the main change will be decreasing winds Tuesday night and Wednesday.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	85° / 75°
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	86° / 77°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 77°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	84° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorm	83° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	83° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorm	85° / 79°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Rain	75° / 64°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	45° / 27°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	72° / 63°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	77° / 68°
London	Cloudy	50° / 36°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	78° / 52°
Manila	Mostly Sunny	93° / 75°
Melbourne	Sunny	82° / 55°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	77° / 70°
New York	Mostly Sunny	46° / 36°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	57° / 46°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	52° / 39°
Busan	Windy	50° / 46°
Rome	Rain	55° / 46°
Salem	Rain	65° / 43°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	65° / 47°
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	52° / 34°
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	46° / 39°
Washington, DC	Showers	48° / 38°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
4:42 AM	LOW TIDE	0.44
10:34 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.90
5:20 PM	LOW TIDE	0.33
11:15 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.67

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:31 AM	6:25 PM
Wednesday	6:30 AM	6:25 PM
Thursday	6:29 AM	6:25 PM
Friday	6:29 AM	6:26 PM
Saturday	6:28 AM	6:26 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	9:32 am	10:18 pm
Wednesday	-	10:14 am	11:09 pm
Thursday	-	10:58 am	-
Friday	12:00 am	11:42 pm	-
Saturday	12:50 am	12:28 pm	-

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769.
E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 19, 2017

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	2:00am	6:05am	Daily
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
LJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	5:40am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	12:00pm	1
JD396	4:50pm	10:00pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	Daily
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:25am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:55pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

Trump embracing potential for trade war

WASHINGTON (AP)— President Donald Trump is embracing the potential for a trade war after announcing his intent to place tariffs on imported steel and aluminum, as he rebuffs allies who have pushed to be exempted from the stiff duties.

The protectionist policy will be made official in the next two weeks, White House officials said Sunday, as the administration defended the decision from critics in Washington and overseas.

Trump appeared unbowed Sunday, as he tweeted that American "Steel and Aluminum industries are dead. Sorry, it's time for a change!"

Trump's pronouncement Thursday that he would impose tariffs of 25 percent and 10 percent, respectively, on imported steel and aluminum, roiled markets and rankled allies. While his rhetoric has been focused on China, the duties will also cover significant imports from Canada, Mexico, South Korea, Japan and the European Union.

AP

President Donald Trump speaks during a meeting with steel and aluminum executives in the Cabinet Room of the White House, Thursday, March 1, 2018, in Washington.

Speaking on CNN's "State of the Union," White House trade adviser Peter Navarro said: "At this point in time there's no country exclusions."

The across-the-board action breaks with the recommendation of the Pentagon, which pushed for more targeted tariffs on metals imports from countries like China and warned that a wide-ranging move would jeopardize national security partnerships. But Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, whose agency oversaw reviews of the industries that recommended the tariffs, said Sunday ABC's "This Week" that Trump is "talking about a fairly broad brush."

Republican South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham said the sweeping action would let China "off the hook," adding the tariffs would drive a wedge between the U.S. and its allies.

"China wins when we fight with Europe," he said on CBS's "Face the Nation." ''China wins when the American consumer has higher prices because of tariffs that don't affect Chinese behavior."

Trump has threatened to tax European cars if the EU boosts tariffs on American products in response to the president's plan to increase duties on steel and aluminum.

British Prime Minister Theresa May raised her "deep concern" at the tariff announcement in a phone call with Trump Sunday.

May's office says she "raised our deep concern at the president's forthcoming announcement on steel and aluminum tariffs, noting that multilateral action was the only way to resolve the problem of global overcapacity."

But Ross rejected threats of retaliation from American allies as "pretty trivial" and not much more than a "rounding error."

New group of coworkers is 'trouble'

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of Secrets to Winning at Office Politics*. Send in questions and get free coaching tips at http://www.yourofficecoach.com, or follow her on Twitter @ officecoach.*

Q: Although I have loved my job for twelve years, things have been going downhill ever since some new people arrived. Now I have a group of coworkers who are nothing but trouble. These petty, spiteful backstabbers constantly criticize the rest of us and keep trying to change the way we work.

My manager is no help because she's just as bad. If you complain about a coworker, she either ignores the problem or makes things worse by telling the person what you said. I've heard her make negative comments about the staff and question our abilities.

I'm afraid to go over her head because life would be hell if she found out. Besides, our new vice-president supports the changes she is making, so he probably doesn't want any complaints. How should I handle this?

A: Reading between the lines, I assume your boss is also new and the vice-president placed her in this role. If so, his support for her is hardly surprising because he's the one who chose her. And if your manager hired the annoying coworkers, she is similarly likely to support them.

In that case, you are facing a dilemma often encountered by long-term employees. When a new executive arrives, major changes follow almost inevitably. As a result, a familiar and comfortable workplace can suddenly feel like alien territory.

When this occurs, one common mistake is to view these changes as "wrong" rather than simply "different." Instead of assessing ideas objectively, employees quickly become argumentative and resistant, thereby doing considerable damage to their future career prospects.

You have correctly concluded that complaining is not a wise move at this point. But if you make a sincere effort to welcome new people and new approaches, you may find that management is open to well-intentioned suggestions which are properly presented.

On the other hand, if you determine that the place you knew and loved has disappeared forever, it may be time to polish up your resume. Because even though you can't bring back the past, you might be able to find it elsewhere.

Q: The last time a national holiday fell on Monday, the owner of our business said we would have the day off. However, on Thursday he changed his mind and said Monday would be a normal workday. When we asked why, he just said there was a lot of work to do.

Losing our holiday after we had already made plans left everyone in complete shock. Now we're afraid the owner is setting a precedent which makes any holiday basically optional. What recourse do we have?

A: Your owner sounds like an inconsiderate jerk. In the absence of any urgent need, cancelling a promised holiday was completely unforgiveable. If this decision reflects his usual management style, the guy may have difficulty keeping quality employees.

Nevertheless, you may be surprised to learn that holidays are, as you say, "basically optional." There is no federal law requiring private employers to grant any holidays at all. Most do, of course, but that's an individual business decision. However, your city or state may require that certain days be observed, so perhaps you should explore that possibility.

'Trump slump' in gun sales continues despite control debate

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)— Gun store owners called it the "Trump slump." Sales of firearms slowed dramatically after the election of Donald Trump as president in 2016 allayed fears of a Democratic crackdown on gun owners.

That trend has continued in recent weeks even with talk of gun control in Congress and among business leaders following the Feb. 14 massacre of 17 people at a Florida high school.

In the past, gun massacres generally led to an uptick in sales as people worried about the government restricting access. But with Parkland, things are different.

"The day after the election, it's just like somebody turned a faucet off," said David Dobransky, 67, who owns Dobransky Firearms, a small gun shop in North Canton, Ohio. Since then, sales there have been cut in half, and nothing the president or Congress has done or said following the Florida shooting has improved business.

Gun owners apparently have faith that Trump won't impose more restrictions, gun show owners say. That's even with the confusing messages Trump has sent in the past week.

He has cast himself as a strong supporter of the National Rifle Association but on Wednesday criticized lawmakers for being too fearful of the NRA to take action. He also reaffirmed positions opposed by the NRA, such as banning gun sales to those under 21.

Then the next day, Trump met with NRA officials and tweeted they'd had a "Good (Great) meeting." The NRA's executive director, tweeting about the same meeting, said Trump and Vice President Mike Pence "don't want gun control."

At Rapid-Fire Firearms in Rapid City, South Dakota, business is "just like normal," owner Robert Akers said Thursday, contrasting business with the panic buying under President Barack Obama.

In an earnings conference call last week, American Outdoor Brands, which owns Smith & Wesson, said revenue fell by one-third over the past three months, consistent with a drop since Trump was elected.

Demand dropped in December and January, before the Florida shooting and the debates on gun laws that followed, he said. The company doesn't expect sales to improve much over the next year.

Sturm Ruger and American Outdoor Brands have both seen their stocks plunge since Trump was elected, as they have mostly reported disappointing sales in recent months. American Outdoor Brands has plunged 67 percent since the presidential election and Sturm Ruger is down 28 percent.

Potentially dampening sales further, four major retailers last week—Kroger, Dick's Sporting Goods, L.L. Bean and Walmart—announced they will no longer sell guns to anyone under 21.

In addition, outdoor retailer REI says it's halting future orders of some popular brands—including CamelBak water carriers, Giro helmets and Camp Chef stoves—whose parent company also makes ammunition and assault-style rifles.

Nation

After Parkland, even idle school threats get tough response

AP
Parents and students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School receive a welcome as they stop at the Pulse night club, Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2018 in Orlando, Fla.

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Fifteen students in one Florida school district are facing felony charges and prison time for making alleged threats since the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School massacre. Meanwhile, an autistic Minnesota high school student whose alleged threat led to a six-hour lockdown is in juvenile court and has received an outpouring of sympathy.

The Feb. 14 killings of 17 people in Parkland, Florida, have ignited a wave of copycat threats, as happens after nearly every high-profile school shooting. Most prove unfounded, but cause big disruptions to schools while tying up police for hours or even days.

Experts say authorities' swift responses are underscoring a climate in which even idle threats will result in serious consequences.

"Kids make bad decisions and I think that in decades past those decisions would have been addressed behind closed doors with the principal and parents," said Ken Trump, president of National School Safety and Security Services, a Cleveland-based consulting company. "Now they're being addressed behind closed doors in the police station and the courtroom."

The Volusia County Schools system in east-central Florida isn't taking chances. Sheriff Michael Chitwood made it clear he had a zero-tolerance policy as threats began after Parkland. On Thursday, he went further, saying students or their families would have to pay the costs of the investigations—at least $1,000 and sometimes much more.

District spokeswoman Nancy Wait said the message is clear: We're not joking around.

"Unfortunately that word didn't get to the students and we started seeing more students making threats in the classroom, and that was frightening to their classmates," she said. "Most of the time these students didn't have access to weapons, but they were still making threats to shoot up their schools."

Don Bridges, president of the National Association of School Resource Officers and a veteran of 16 years on duty at Franklin High School in suburban Baltimore, said the number of threats goes down when districts send a strong message that they won't be tolerated.

The Educator's School Safety Network, which tracks reports of school threats and violent incidents across the country, has documented a spike since Parkland. The Ohio group counted 797 as of Sunday. Most (743) were for threats of various kinds, including gun and bomb threats. The threats were made mostly via social media (331) and verbally (119).

That amounts to about a sevenfold increase in the usual rate, director of programs Amy Klinger said.

"The mentality has shifted in a very short period of time from kids being kids to this is very serious stuff," she said. She expects consequences of post-Parkland threats to be harsher than before.

"They almost have to be," she said. "Do we want to do this for the rest of the school year? Do we want to have this constant chaos and fear, and people being upset? How much learning is going on?"

Tom Clark, a defense attorney in Santa Fe, New Mexico, represents a 14-year-old boy whose threat preceded Parkland but who faced tough consequences.

Clark said the boy had been having a bad day and wrote a list of people he wanted to shoot. After someone found the list in November, the boy, who had never been in trouble before, was jailed, facing hefty charges and a lifetime expulsion. He eventually was sentenced to probation.

Democrats seek to help wealthy in response to tax changes

CHERRY HILL, N.J. (AP)—Resistance to the Republican tax overhaul comes with an ideological twist for some Democratic state officials: They've styled themselves as champions of the working class but are pushing hard for measures that would reduce taxes mostly for the wealthy.

Democratic governors and lawmakers in a handful of high-income, high-tax states are promoting policies that are intended to spare their residents the pain of the new $10,000 cap on deductions for state and local taxes. Connecticut, New Jersey and New York are even planning to sue the federal government over the new cap, which was a key provision of the Republican tax overhaul adopted in December.

The legislative workarounds have moved swiftly through state Senate chambers in California and New Jersey. A bill with similar components passed the Oregon Senate and House in the last two weeks. The concept is under consideration in Connecticut, Maryland, New York, Rhode Island and the District of Columbia.

Proponents say the cap on state and local tax deductions disproportionately affects states controlled by Democrats and raises the cost of living. They say that has the potential to drive well-off residents to other states.

California state Senate President Pro Tem Kevin de Leon, a Democrat sponsoring the bill there, said the state budget would take a big hit if wealthier residents flee California because they pay the bulk of the taxes.

"We have to offer services like schools, like health care, like resources for senior citizens who have Alzheimer's," he said.

John Moorlach, a Republican state senator, finds irony in the Democrats' efforts.

Last year, a Democratic colleague sarcastically thanked him for taking a stance that would protect yacht owners. This year, Moorlach had a retort: "It's rich that you guys are trying to help the wealthy now in California," he said at a January committee meeting. "So welcome aboard."

De Leon, who is running for U.S. Senate, said it's the first time he's ever been criticized for helping the wealthy.

Republican critics say the states should be reassessing their taxes instead of trying to circumvent the new tax law.

"What's worse?" asked New Jersey state Sen. Joe Pennacchio, a Republican who voted against the workaround measure there. "Not being able to take the tax deduction or having high taxes to begin with?"

Under the deductions, known as SALT for state and local taxes, money paid to state and local governments is not counted as taxable income by the federal government in many cases. The higher a taxpayer's state and local taxes, the bigger the benefit the federal deduction can be.

The new law caps the deduction while also lowering tax rates. Overall, it's expected to result in reduced tax bills for most Americans, with the biggest savings going to high earners.

But in California, New Jersey and New York, a much larger share of the top 1 percent of earners—24 to 43 percent of them—actually would see their federal taxes rise under the GOP tax law, according to an analysis from the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center. That is largely because they would lose most of the benefit of the SALT deduction.

Case alleging racial bias in hair tests goes to trial

BOSTON (AP)—Keri Hogan was nearing her dream of becoming a Boston police officer when a drug test using a sample of her hair came back positive for cocaine.

Hogan and a group of black officers who lost their jobs or were disciplined sued the city in 2005, claiming its hair test is discriminatory because black people's hair is more susceptible to false positives.

More than a decade later, the case that could have big implications for the practice of hair testing is heading to trial. The bench trial starts Monday.

"This is the test case that everyone is watching," said Lewis Maltby, president of the National Workrights Institute, a New Jersey-based workers' rights nonprofit.

Hair testing companies tout their products as superior to urine screening because they can detect drug use much farther back and it's more difficult for users to cheat.

But experts have long been divided over the reliability of hair testing due to the difficulty in determining whether drugs were ingested or were absorbed into the hair from the environment.

"Hair is an excellent indicator of exposure" to drugs, said Dr. Peter Stout, president of the Houston Forensic Science Center, who isn't involved in the case. "What starts to get difficult is determining from a hair result the route of that exposure."

Experts agree that cocaine binds to melanin, which is found in higher concentrations in darker hair. But whether hair testing is racially discriminatory remains contentious.

David Kidwell, a chemist who will testify on behalf of the officers, also says cosmetic treatments commonly used by black people can damage hair cuticles, which increases the risk that hair becomes contaminated by drugs in the environment.

But Psychemedics, the company that continues to perform testing for Boston police, rejects any suggestion that its tests are racially biased. Psychemedics' wash procedures eliminate any possibility of a false positive, he said.

"We know that our science is rock solid and we stand behind it today as we have for the last 30 years," said Raymond Kubacki, president of Psychemedics, which also does drug testing for the New York Police Department.

Under Boston police's policy, officers who test positive for the first time can try keeping their job by admitting to drug use and entering a rehabilitation program while they're suspended and placed in an administrative position.

Asia

China says defense budget to rise to $173B in 2018

AP
A Chinese military band conductor looks back as he leads the band when Chinese leaders enter the hall during the opening session of the annual National People's Congress at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Monday, March 5, 2018.

BEIJING (AP)—China's defense budget will rise 8 percent to 1.1 trillion yuan ($173 billion) this year as the country is preparing to launch its second aircraft carrier, integrating stealth fighters into its air force and fielding an array of advanced missiles able to attack air and sea targets at vast distances.

The figure released in a report Monday to the ceremonial National People's Congress is an increase from last year, when finance ministry officials told the Associated Press the budget was rising 7 percent to 1.044 trillion yuan ($151 billion).

Years of double-digit percentage growth have given China the world's second-largest defense budget after the United States, which is in a class of its own with a proposed budget of $716 billion for next year.

"We will stick to the Chinese path in strengthening our armed forces, advance all aspects of military training and war preparedness," Premier Li Keqiang said as he read a report to nearly 3,000 delegates at the Great Hall of the People.

The armed forces will "firmly and resolutely safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests," Li said.

China has the world's largest military by number of personnel, but Li said the country had "basically completed" the target of reducing the size of the armed forces by 300,000 troops. That would leave the military at around 2 million troops.

But China's defense spending as a share of GDP and the budget remains lower than that of other major nations, Zhang Yesui, a spokesman for the legislature, said Sunday.

Analysts don't consider China's publicly announced defense spending to be entirely accurate since defense equipment projects account for a significant amount of "off book" expenditures.

Much of China's energies have been focused on what is known as anti-access/area denial, or A2/AD operations that seek to scare the U.S. Navy and other forces far from China's shores.

China's navy has been training rigorously on the Liaoning aircraft carrier, which was bought from Ukraine and heavily refurbished. In April, it launched a 50,000-ton carrier built entirely on its own based on the Ukrainian model.

It will join the improved Type 093B Shang class nuclear-powered attack submarine equipped with anti-ship missiles—considered only slightly inferior to the U.S. Navy's mainstay Los Angeles class boats—and the Type 055 guided-missile destroyers at the forefront of China's naval technology.

Such vessels stand to alter the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific where the U.S. Navy has long been dominant and regional rivals such as Japan and India are stepping up their presence. Most navy ships already have anti-ship cruise missiles with longer ranges than those of their U.S. counterparts.

China's navy is also relying on numerical superiority to boost its influence.

All three of China's sea forces; the navy, coast guard and maritime militia, are the largest of their types by number of ships, allowing them to "maintain presence and influence in vital seas," according to Andrew S. Erickson of the U.S. Naval War College's China Maritime Studies Institute.

All three fleets are growing "leaner and meaner" due to a greater emphasis on technical sophistication, Erickson writes, adding that the U.S. also anticipates facing a Chinese submarine fleet twice its number, though less technologically advanced.

In the air, China last month said it had begun equipping combat units with its J-20 stealth fighter jet, the country's answer to fifth-generation jets such as the U.S. F-22 and F-35. No less impressive is China's missile technology, particularly the DF-21D built to take out an aircraft carrier while underway, and a new air-to-air missile with a range of some 400 kilometers that could attack assets such as early warning aircraft and refueling tankers crucial to U.S. Air Force operations.

ASIAN BRIEFS

US Navy carrier's visit to Vietnam puts China on notice

DANANG, Vietnam (AP)—For the first time since the Vietnam War, a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier is visiting a Vietnamese port, seeking to bolster both countries' efforts to stem expansionism by China in the South China Sea. Monday's visit by the USS Carl Vinson brings more than 6,000 crew members to the central coastal city of Danang, the largest such U.S. military presence in Vietnam since the Southeast Asian nation was unified under Communist leadership after the war ended in 1975. The visit comes amid China's increasing military buildup in the Paracel islands and seven artificial islands in the Spratlys in maritime territory also claimed by Vietnam. China claims most of the South China Sea and has challenged traditional U.S. naval supremacy in the western Pacific.

Cardinal's alleged sex victims testify in Australian court

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—The alleged victims of the most senior Vatican official ever charged in the Catholic Church sex abuse crisis began giving secret evidence to an Australian court on Monday. Australian Cardinal George Pell wore his clerical collar for the first day of the hearing in the Melbourne Magistrate Court to determine whether prosecutors have sufficient evidence to put him on trial. The committal hearing is scheduled to take up to a month. The testimony of alleged victims was suppressed from publication and the courtroom was closed to the public and media. Their testimony is expected to take up to two weeks. Prosecutor Mark Gibson had earlier told Magistrate Belinda Wallington that the complainants would give evidence by a video link. Defense lawyer Robert Richter said he did not object to the complainants not attending court in person. Wallington gave permission for one of complainants to be accompanied by what Gibson described a "support dog" while giving evidence.

Kashmir shuts after Indian troops kill 3 civilians, 1 rebel

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—Authorities have clamped a curfew on parts of Indian-controlled Kashmir to contain protests after Indian soldiers killed three young civilians and a rebel. Indian army Col. Rajesh Kalia says militants fired at a checkpoint in southern Shopian area and a shootout with soldiers followed. Kalia says a rebel and three young civilian associates were killed. Locals say the three civilians were killed in cold blood. Kashmir is divided between Pakistan and India with both nations claiming the region entirely. Rebel groups demand the region be united under Pakistani rule or as an independent country. Most people in the portion governed by India support the rebels' cause against Indian rule.

Seoul envoy to raise nuclear disarmament on N. Korea trip

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A special envoy for South Korean President Moon Jae-in said Monday he'll relay Moon's hopes for North Korean nuclear disarmament and a permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula when he meets this week with North Korean officials.

Moon's national security director, Chung Eui-yong, spoke to reporters ahead of a two-day trip that may include talks with leader Kim Jong Un. If that meeting is realized, Chung would become the first South Korean official to meet Kim in person since he took power upon his dictator father's death in late 2011.

Kim's barrage of weapons tests over the last year has raised fears of war. But Moon is pressing what he sees as momentum created by North Korea's participation in last month's Pyeongchang Winter Olympics. Kim's sister, Kim Yo Jong, led a high-level delegation south.

If North Korea shows a willingness to disarm, it could indicate a restart of dialogue between Pyongyang and Washington to defuse the North Korean nuclear standoff.

"I will certainly deliver President Moon's firm resolve to achieve a denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and genuine and permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula," Chung said. He said he'll push for "in-depth" talks to find ways to help arrange the restart of dialogue between Pyongyang and Washington.

Chung, a longtime diplomat, heads a 10-member delegation that includes intelligence chief Suh Hoon and vice Unification Minister Chun Hae-sung. The presidential Blue House said the high-profile delegation is to reciprocate the trip by Kim Yo Jong, who became the first member of the North's ruling Kim family to come to South Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

Kim Yo Jong and other senior North Korean officials came to the start and close of the Olympics, during which they met Moon and conveyed Kim Jong Un's invitation to visit Pyongyang and expressed their willingness to hold talks with the United States.

After its Pyongyang trip, Chung's delegation is to fly to the United States to brief officials about the outcome of its talks with North Korean officials.

North Korea has repeatedly said it won't put its nuclear program on a negotiating table, while the United States has made it clear that it doesn't want talks for the sake of talks and said all options, including military measures, are on the table.

President Donald Trump said talks with North Korea will happen only "under the right conditions." Moon has yet to accept Kim's invitation to visit Pyongyang for what would be the third inter-Korean summit talks. The past two summit talks, one in 2000 and the other in 2007, were held between Kim's late father Kim Jong Il and two liberal South Korean presidents.

World

Syrian troops advance in rebel-held region near capital

BEIRUT (AP)—Syrian President Bashar Assad vowed Sunday to continue with a military offensive in a rebel-held region near the capital, as troops and allied militias captured a number of villages and towns in the largest advance since a wide-scale operation began last month.

Speaking to a small group of reporters in Damascus, Assad said the five-hour daily "humanitarian pause" in eastern Ghouta would continue, to allow for any civilians wishing to leave the area to do so.

"There is no contradiction between the truce and the military operation," he added.

Assad also denied that the Syrian government carried out toxic gas attacks, describing such reports as part of the western countries' "dictionary of lies."

Meanwhile, the United Nations said it planned to deliver aid to a total of 70,000 people in the stricken region starting Monday after it received approval from the government to move in. U.N. officials had said lack of approvals and consensus among the warring parties, as well as the limited duration of the five-hour Russian-ordered humanitarian pause, had made aid delivery impossible.

Syria's Central Military Media said government forces captured at least six villages and towns along the edge of eastern Ghouta in the advance that began late Saturday. The Central Military Media later said the troops continued their movement, reaching the outskirts of Mesraba, in central Ghouta.

The military advances come amid reports of wide-scale internal displacement as civilians flee government forces.

This photo released Feb. 20, 2018 by the Syrian Civil Defense group known as the White Helmets, shows members of the Syrian Civil Defense group removing a victim from under the rubble of a damaged shelter that was attacked during airstrikes and shelling by Syrian government forces, in Ghouta, a suburb of Damascus, Syria. AP

A reporter from state-run Al-Ikhbariyah TV accompanied the troops and broadcast from Nashabiyah, a village on the southeastern edge of eastern Ghouta. The reporter said the Syrian troops had crossed a "moat" and seized around 12 square kilometers (4.6 square miles). The advance was backed by intense shelling and airstrikes.

Rebel factions said they launched a counteroffensive Sunday, sending fighters behind government lines in a series of attacks. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the rebels regained control of at least one town and fighting continued.

The Observatory and the Syrian Civil Defense said civilians had fled their homes because of the advancing troops, with many of them taking cover in underground shelters. "It is a scorched-earth policy," said Ghouta-based activist Nour Adam. "People are moving out because of the relentless bombing."

Eastern Ghouta, home to some 400,000 people, has been under a crippling siege and daily bombardment for months. More than 600 civilians have been killed in the last two weeks alone.

Hamza Beriqdar, spokesman of the main rebel faction in Ghouta called the Army of Islam, said in an audio recording shared on social media that the opposition fighters had to retreat from some areas in eastern Ghouta amid a hail of fire from artillery shelling, airstrikes and helicopter attacks, also calling it a "scorched earth policy." He said the rebels are regrouping and will continue to fight, and he called on civilians in Ghouta not to lose faith or criticize rebel fighters to keep a unified front and maintain morale.

Meanwhile, no civilians have left Ghouta through a humanitarian corridor set up by Russia and the Syrian government nearly a week ago.

Russia has accused the rebels of preventing civilians from leaving, which insurgents have denied. The rebels say the humanitarian corridor is part of government efforts to forcibly displace the population, and have called on government forces to implement a full cease-fire adopted by the U.N. Security Council.

Al-Ikhbariya TV quoted an unnamed military official as saying the latest operation came in response to the shelling of Damascus and the surrounding area by rebels. The official said preparations are underway to deliver food to civilians in the besieged area.

The White House condemned the offensive in eastern Ghouta, saying in a statement Sunday that the Syrian campaign backed by Russia and Iran is killing "innocent civilians under the false auspices of counterterrorism operations."

"This is the same combination of lies and indiscriminate force that Russia and the Syrian regime used to isolate and destroy Aleppo in 2016, where thousands of civilians were killed," the U.S. statement said.

Also on Sunday, the office of French President Emmanuel Macron said the French leader "strongly urged" Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to pressure the Syrian government to end "the indiscriminate attacks against the besieged populations of eastern Ghouta, to allow humanitarian access and evacuate the critical medical cases."

In a phone call, Macron and Rouhani agreed to work together in the coming days to obtain results on the ground, deliver the necessary assistance to civilians and implement the U.N.-sponsored cease-fire, the French president's office said in a statement.

Macron made a plea to Rouhani about the situation in eastern Ghouta because of the "links" between Iran and the Syrian government, the French statement said.

Eastern Ghouta has been besieged by government forces since 2013. The last aid delivery to Ghouta was on Feb. 14, when help was sent to around 7,000 people in Nashabiyah, now under government control.

In a statement Sunday, the U.N. said it plans to deliver aid to Douma, the largest town in eastern Ghouta, with its partners on the ground. An aid convoy consisting of 46 truckloads will be allowed in Monday with health and nutrition supplies and food for 27,500. The convoy will be led by Ali al-Za'tari, the U.N. resident humanitarian coordinator in Syria.

"We hope that the convoy may proceed as planned and will be followed by other convoys," al-Za'tari said.

Ex-Burkina Faso soldier may have been in extremist attacks

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso (AP)—A former Burkina Faso soldier may have participated in Friday's simultaneous attacks by al-Qaida-linked extremists on the army headquarters and heavily-guarded French Embassy in the capital.

The government has launched an investigation into the attacks which killed eight soldiers and injured more than 80. French military experts are expected in Ouagadougou to help with the probe, according to a government statement.

One of the killed soldiers is believed to have been fired from the army after a 2011 mutiny and may actually have been an assailant, a person close to the investigation told The Associated Press. Many of the attackers were wearing army uniforms, according to witnesses, and some were from Burkina Faso, including two men arrested in connection with the attack, said the official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not permitted to speak to the press.

The attack on the army headquarter was aimed at a conference room, narrowly missing a meeting of top officers, which would have "beheaded" the military leadership, according to Security Minister Clement Sawadogo.

An al-Qaida-linked group based in Mali claimed responsibility Saturday for the dual attacks.

Militant group Jama Nusrat Ul-Islam wa Al-Muslimin issued a message late Saturday saying it was behind the attacks, according to the Mauritanian news agency Alakhbar which often carries claims of responsibility by jihadi groups for attacks in West Africa.

The extremist group carried out the dual attacks in Burkina Faso in retaliation for the killing of one of its leaders in a recent raid by French troops, reported the agency.

The group's formation was announced in a video in March 2017 as a merger of three extremist groups: the al-Qaida-linked al-Mourabitoun, Ansar Dine and al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb. It has positioned itself as the al-Qaida branch in Mali, and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, and has also claimed attacks in Mali and Niger.

WORLD BRIEFS

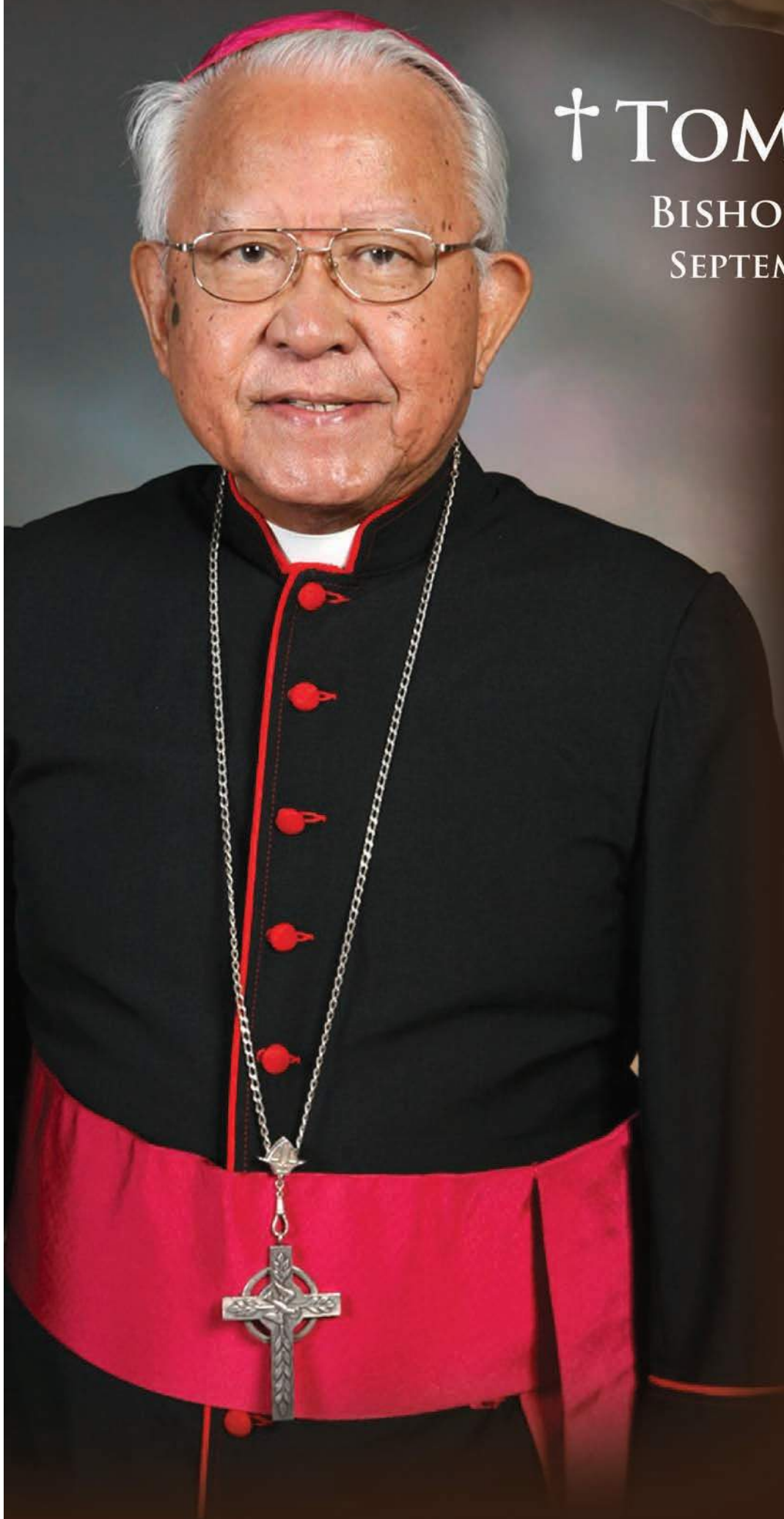
Merkel in line for a fourth term after months of uncertainty

BERLIN (AP)—Germany ended months of political uncertainty Sunday when Chancellor Angela Merkel gained the support needed to preserve her governing coalition and secure a fourth term as leader of Europe's most powerful economy. The center-left Social Democrats voted overwhelmingly to remain in a coalition with Merkel's conservative bloc, after difficult and drawn-out negotiations triggered by September's elections, which saw the rise of a new right-wing force in German politics and raised questions about Merkel's future. Parliament is expected to meet March 14 to re-elect Merkel as chancellor, ending the longest time Germany has been without a new government after elections in its postwar history. Merkel has drawn flak from both left and right for maintaining an unabashedly centrist course since taking office in 2005. With the coalition approved, she can now turn her attention to tackling rising anti-immigrant sentiment in Germany while pushing forward efforts to reform the stumbling European Union.

Election projections in Italy point to hung Parliament

ROME (AP)—Election projections in Italy early Monday showed a center-right coalition that includes an anti-migrant party edging past the populist 5-Star Movement, but no single bloc or party with the support to win a majority in Parliament. If confirmed by official results, the outcome could set the stage for weeks of political haggling to forge a new governmentAn RAI State TV projection from Sunday's election showed the center-right bloc in front with 35.5 percent and the center-left, which includes the Democratic Party leading the current government, lagging at 23 percent. The anti-establishment 5-Star Movement had 32.5 percent. Another projection that looked only at how parties fared had the 5-Star Movement snagging 31.8 percent of the vote, but far from the threshold it needed to form a government.

Death & Funeral Announcement



† Tomas A. Camacho

Bishop Emeritus Chalan Kanoa

September 18, 1933 – March 05, 2018

On behalf of the diocese and the family, Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez. D.D., humbly asks for your prayers for the eternal repose of the soul of Bishop Tomas.

Nightly Mass starting on March 05, 2018 is being offered at 6 PM followed by the Holy Rosary at Mount Carmel Cathedral.

On Tuesday, March 13, 2018, his remains will be escorted from CHC Hospital to Mount Carmel Cathedral. *Responso* will be done at 8:00 AM followed by the Holy Rosary and public viewing. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11 AM.

It was the expressed desire of Bishop Tomas that in lieu of floral donations, monetary donations can be made to the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa for the retirement fund of the clergy.

Overdrive

AUTO REVIEW:

A change of face can't hide the 2019 Jeep Cherokee's off-road agility

The 2019 Jeep Cherokee Trailhawk retains its off-road agility.
TNS

By LARRY PRINTZ
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

If you believe everything that you read, artificial intelligence will soon be our chauffeurs, eliminating the need for humans behind the wheel. For any number of bland sedans, having microchips pilot you to your destination would only add to their appeal.

But AI would kill the appeal of Jeeps, given that their raison d'etre is the thrill of tackling tough off-road tundra.

That said, many longtime Jeep enthusiasts would say that AI would be fine for the Jeep Cherokee, which was designed more for pokey parkways and irritating interstates than the roads less travelled, or for that matter, less paved. Sadly, most Cherokees go off-road only when accidentally running over a small shrub at the end of the driveway.

Such perceptions brought me to California to sample the 2019 Jeep Cherokee Trailhawk, where I ended up tackling terrain that few Cherokee owners would ever consider traversing. Thankfully, the same chip set that someday might have a hand in automatically driving is helping the Cherokee navigate the sort of terrain few alleged SUVs can actually tackle. Credit Jeep's Selec-Terrain traction control system, which allows the driver to choose one of five settings: Auto, Snow, Sport, Sand/Mud and Rock, as well as Active Drive II, which locks the front and rear driveshafts, has a mechanical locking rear differential, and a crawl ratio of 51:2:1.

Inching down the hillside, I was happy to have Jeep's legendary off-road capability in what many consumers perceive to be nothing more than a mall rat. The vehicle easily navigated California primeval with an ease that would be unimaginable in the Cherokee's chief competitors, the Toyota RAV4, Honda CR-V and Ford Escape, all family haulers more than true compact SUVs.

That's to be expected of a Jeep, however.

The real news is the visual revisions that occur for the new model year. Gone is the unconventionally bizarre headlight treatment that attracted and repulsed buyers, but provided a key benefit. "The initial design was aimed at breaking through and getting the conversation started, which it did. But at the same time, it's time to broaden the reach with new styling," said Scott Tallon, director of the Jeep brand.

This explains the Cherokee's new front fascia, which puts the headlamps where the daytime running lamps were previously, eradicating the Cherokee's esoteric mug. The front end is more upright, and has been raised an inch. Stylists also revised the tailgate, removing 18 pounds of weight and incorporating space for the license plate, which previously was housed in the bumper. It makes for a more attractive look.

For 2019, there are five ascending trim levels: Latitude, Latitude Plus, Limited, Overland and trail-rated Trailhawk. Most buyers choose the base Latitude or Latitude Plus with the standard 180-horsepower 2.4-liter four-cylinder engine, although the 271-horsepower 3.2-liter V6—standard on upper trims, optional on others—accounted for nearly half of Cherokee sales last year thanks to its 4,500-pound tow rating. A third option, new for 2019, is a turbocharged 270-horsepower 2.0-liter four-cylinder engine that boasts more torque than the V6—295 foot-pounds vs. 239—but offers only 4,000 pounds of towing capacity. "It's not so much how much torque it's making, it's where it's making it," said Tallon. "The V6 has no spool-up, and the turbos generate a lot more heat. So if you're using the turbos a lot, it's going to create a lot more heat. We did lower the tow rating to 4,000 pounds, which is still exceptional for SUV of that size."

NUTS & BOLTS

- **Base prices:** $23,995-$36,275
- **Engine:** Turbocharged 2.0-liter four-cylinder
- **Horsepower:** 270
- **Torque:** 295 pound-feet
- **EPA fuel economy (city/highway):** Not rated
- **Towing capacity:** 4,000 pounds
- **Ground clearance:** 8.7 inches
- **Wheelbase:** 107.1 inches
- **Length:** 182 inches
- **Cargo capacity:** 25.8-128 cubic feet

The turbo is optional across all trims, and while fuel economy is the prime motivation in offering it, the new powerplant does offer other advantages. "You get a fun-to-drive factor that you didn't have before." He added that the new engine's lower towing capacity versus the cheaper V6 engine isn't an issue. "Towing isn't everyone's top priority. I think it's performance, fuel economy and driving dynamics and making it a fun-to-drive vehicle. I don't think it's a big compromise for most people; 4,000 pounds will get most of your toys from point A to point B."

While you might be tempted to go for the V6, the turbo four provides a dementor and power band that makes the Cherokee a formidable road warrior. Turbo lag isn't noticeable, and the power delivery is far more enthusiastic than with other engine options. It's almost as if the nine-speed automatic's ratios were optimised for the turbo engine. Try it before deciding on the V6.

All engines mate to a nine-speed automatic transmission. Front-wheel drive is standard, all-wheel drive is a $1,500 option. While upper trims get Active Drive II, other models have the still capable Active Drive I, a fully-automatic system that requires no driver intervention. Driver assistance safety features include lane departure warning with lane keep assist and parallel/perpendicular parking assist.

The ride proved to have the balance that Jeep has so expertly mastered, proving well-controlled when carving through corners yet possessing enough wheel articulation in the rough.

While traversing the great unknown or the too-well known, you'll find the cabin of the Cherokee to be most agreeable. The seats proved to be comfortable, although they lacked the side bolstering needed during off-road manoeuvres. Legroom was generous up front, more than adequate in the second row. The cabin was quiet.

The instrument panel is anchored by a 7.0-, or 8.4-inch touchscreen display depending on model, and includes Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. Thoughtfully, designers have reworked the center console to incorporate a media hub that includes a USB port and 115-volt outlet.

And while a great infotainment system can make a trip more enjoyable, it's the visual revisions on the 2019 Jeep Cherokee that demand your consideration if you're looking for a smaller SUV. And despite its newfound sophisticated appearance, this Jeep is no mere mall rat. It's as much fun to drive off-road as well as on, meaning that won't want to leave the chore to a microchip.

Larry Printz is an automotive journalist based in South Florida. Readers may send him email at TheDrivingPrintz@gmail.com.

Life & Style

'Shape of Water' triumphs at an Oscars full of change

By JAKE COYLE
AP FILM WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The 90th Academy Awards crowned Guillermo del Toro's monster fable "The Shape of Water" best picture at an Oscars that confronted the post-Harvey Weinstein era and sought to pivot to a vision of a more inclusive movie business.

A sense of change was palpable at the ceremony Sunday at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles, where winners made impassioned arguments for gender equality and diversity.

Guillermo del Toro's monster fable "The Shape of Water," which came in with a leading 13 nods, took a leading four awards, including best production design, best score and best director for del Toro. He became the third Mexican-born filmmaker to win the award, joining his friends and countrymen Alejandro Inarritu and Alfonso Cuaron—who once were dubbed "the Three Amigos."

"The greatest thing that art does, and that our industry does, is erase the lines in the sand," said del Toro, alluding to his international career.

Jordan Peele won for his script to his horror sensation "Get Out," becoming the first African-American to win for best original screenplay. Peele said he stopped writing it "20 times," skeptical that it would ever get made.

"But I kept coming back to it because I knew if someone would let me make this movie, that people would hear it and people would see it," said Peele. "So I want to dedicate this to all the people who raised my voice and let me make this movie."

In a year lacking a clear front-runner the awards were spread around. Christopher Nolan's World War II epic "Dunkirk" landed three awards, all for its technical craft: editing, sound editing and sound design.

Things went expected in the acting categories, where Frances McDormand won her second Oscar for her performance in "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri." McDormand asked all the attending female nominees stand up in the theater.

"Look around, ladies and gentlemen, because we all have stories to tell and projects that need financing," declared McDormand. "I have two words to leave with you tonight, ladies and gentlemen, Inclusion Rider."

Subbing for last year's best-actor winner, Casey Affleck, in presenting the best-actress award were Jodie Foster and Jennifer Lawrence. "It's a new day in Hollywood," said Lawrence.

Three widely admired veteran actors won their first Oscars. Gary Oldman won for his Winston Churchill in "Darkest Hour," Allison Janney ("I, Tonya") took best supporting actress, and Sam Rockwell ("Three Billboards") won best supporting actor. Oldman thanked his "99-years young" mother. "Put the kettle on," he told her. "I'm bringing Oscar home."

But many of the show's most powerful moments came in between the awards. Ashley Judd, Anabella Sciorra and Salma Hayek—who all made allegations of sexual misconduct against Weinstein—together assembled for a mid-show segment dedicated to the #MeToo movement that has followed the downfall of Weinstein, long an Oscar heavyweight. They were met by a standing ovation.

"We work together to make sure the next 90 years empower these limitless possibilities of equality, diversity, inclusion and intersectionality," said Judd. "That's what this year has promised us."

Host Jimmy Kimmel opened with a monologue that mixed Weinstein punchlines with earnest comments about reforming gender equality in Hollywood. And of course, Kimmel—returning to the scene of the flub—dove straight into material about last year's infamous best-picture mix-up.

"I do want to mention, this year, when you hear your name called, don't get up right away," said Kimmel. "Give us a minute."

But while Kimmel spent a few moments on the fiasco known as Envelopegate, he expended far more minutes frankly and soberly discussing the parade of sexual harassment allegations in the wake of the revelations regarding Weinstein. Kimmel cited the industry's poor record for female directors and equal pay.

"We can't let bad behavior slide anymore," said Kimmel. "The world is watching us."

Gesturing to a giant statue on the stage, he praised Oscar, himself for keeping "his hands where you can see them" and for having "no penis at all." But Kimmel introduced the broadcast as "a night for positivity," and cited, among other things, the box-office success of "Black Panther" and "Wonder Woman."

"I remember a time when the major studios didn't believe a woman or a minority could open a superhero movie—and the reason I remember that time is because it was March of last year," said Kimmel.

Several cinema legends won their first Oscar. James Ivory, 89, won best adapted screenplay for his script to the coming-of-age drama "Call Me By Your Name," becoming the oldest winner ever. After 14 nominations, revered cinematographer Roger Deakins finally won for his photography on "Blade Runner 2049." In the category, Rachel Morrison ("Mudbound") became the first woman nominated for best cinematography.

Pakistan-born comedian Kumail Nanjiani joined Kenyan-born Lupita Nyong'o to salute the so-called Dreamers—immigrants brought to the U.S. illegally as children and here without permanent protection from deportation. "Dreams are the foundation of Hollywood and dreams are the foundation of America. And, so, to all the Dreamers out there, we stand with you," Nanjiani said.

Later, Pixar's colorful ode to Mexican culture "Coco" won best animated film as well as best song for "Remember Me." Best foreign language film went to Chile's "A Fantastic Woman," Sebastian Lelio's drama starring transgender actress Daniela Vega.

"The biggest thank you of all to the people of Mexico," said director Lee Unkrich to loud applause. "Marginalized people deserve to feel like they belong. Representation matters."

Netflix scored its first feature-film Oscar, with best documentary going to "Icarus," Bryan Fogel's investigation into doping in sports, aided by the assistance of Grigory Rodchenkov, the head of the Russian anti- doping laboratory who candidly discussed the doping scheme under Vladimir Putin. Fogel dedicated the award to Rodchenkov, "our fearless whistleblower who now lives in grave danger."

"Darkest Hour" won for best make-up. The period romance "Phantom Thread" won for costume design.

Guillermo del Toro, winner of the award for best director for "The Shape of Water" celebrates in the audience at the Oscars on Sunday, March 4, 2018, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. AP

Gary Oldman accepts the award for best performance by an actor in a leading role for "Darkest Hour" at the Oscars on Sunday, March 4, 2018, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. AP

Frances McDormand accepts the award for best performance by an actress in a leading role for "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" at the Oscars on Sunday. AP

Allison Janney accepts the award for best performance by an actress in a supporting role for "I, Tonya" at the Oscars on Sunday, March 4, 2018, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. AP

Sam Rockwell accepts the award for best performance by an actor in a supporting role for "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" at the Oscars on Sunday, March 4, 2018, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. AP

No dress code, but plenty of references to MeToo at Oscars

By JOCELYN NOVECK
AP NATIONAL WRITER

Ashley Judd, from left, Annabella Sciorra and Salma Hayek speak at the Oscars on Sunday, March 4, 2018, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. AP

There was no #MeToo or Time's Up dress code on the Oscar red carpet. But the topic was, to no one's surprise, a major talking point of the evening—and host Jimmy Kimmel got right to it in his opening monologue.

"Here's how clueless Hollywood is about women," Kimmel said. "We made a movie called 'What Women Want' and it starred Mel Gibson."

Mixing the serious theme with a little humor, Kimmel said the world was watching—and that Hollywood needed to set an example.

"If we can stop sexual harassment in the workplace, women will only ever have to deal with harassment all the time, every place else they go," he quipped.

And he evoked the now-disgraced name of Harvey Weinstein, whose sexual misconduct—revealed late last year—launched the stunning reckoning that has spread to other areas of society in just a few months. For years one of the biggest players at the Oscars, Weinstein has now been thrown out of the academy. Kimmel marveled that the only other person ever kicked out was a character actor who shared screeners.

The most emotional #MeToo moment, though, came courtesy of actresses Ashley Judd, Annabella Sciorra and Salma Hayek, three women who were instrumental in the unfolding Weinstein revelations. They came onstage to introduce a montage that celebrated diversity in cinematic storytelling—including gender and race.

Judd, whose accusations appeared in the first New York Times article about Weinstein, spoke about "new voices, different voices, OUR voices."

"Time's Up!" she said.

On the red carpet, one of the many guests speaking about #MeToo was the founder of the movement, Tarana Burke.

"We did the dress code thing, and now we're doing the work," Burke told The Associated Press. "The plan is to continue to do this work to give people resources."

But elsewhere on the carpet, an uncomfortable drama was playing out, as a number of stars appeared to spurn Ryan Seacrest, the E! anchor who has recently been accused of sexual misconduct—including groping—by a stylist who worked for him. Timothee Chalamet, Viola Davis, Armie Hammer, Margot Robbie and others appeared to pass him over. Some stars did speak to him, including nominees Allison Janney, Christopher Plummer and Mary J. Blige, who noted in another interview that Seacrest was "fighting for his identity."

Seacrest has denied the allegations and E! has stood by him. But many on Twitter complained about reports that the network had instituted a 30-second delay to prevent awkward confrontations. The network said that it was "business as usual. As always, we tape multiple sources of content simultaneously to deliver the best possible show, and there are often brief delays between interviews."

Burke, before the awards, had said Seacrest shouldn't be on the carpet, putting stars in an awkward position. "We shouldn't have to make those choices of, 'Do we or don't we?'" she told Variety.

Drama in red and neutrals on Oscars red carpet

By LEANNE ITALIE
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

Jennifer Lawrence poses at the Oscars on Sunday, March 4, 2018, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. AP

Looks in neutrals, reds and purples brought the drama Sunday on the Oscars carpet, along with a healthy dose of shiny gold, but Nicole Kidman stood out in stunning cobalt blue at Hollywood's biggest fashion show.

Kidman, a presenter, was among the last to walk in Los Angeles when she showed up with a wave to the cameras in her power look, a strapless gown with a huge bow in front. Sandra Bullock brought the strength in a gold Louis Vuitton custom halter dress that draped at the waist and went black at the hem.

Salma Hayek looked like exotic royalty in a custom Gucci gown in lilac. It was heavily jeweled and had a busy, ruffled tiered skirt. Rita Moreno, meanwhile, honored Academy Awards history by donning the same gown (with a bold-pattern full skirt) she wore in 1962, when she won an Oscar for "West Side Story."

"It's been hanging in my closet this whole time," Moreno told The Associated Press.

A few recently returned Olympians showed up on the red carpet, including skier Lindsey Vonn in a fringed black gown and diamond choker with statement red stones. Figure skaters Adam Rippon and Mirai Nagasu walked together. He wore belt-leather straps that crossed his chest and she chose a sheer, long-sleeve gown in soft blue.

Allison Williams of "Get Out" went for neutral. So did Gina Rodriguez in a nude sheath with silver embellishment, a plunging neckline and full princess skirt, courtesy of Zuhair Murad.

But those princess moments were at a minimum, in favor of reasonably safe and easy looks.

"It wasn't about elaborate or embellished tonight. The winners in the fashion stakes kept to the simple, sleek and gorgeous, and still packed the wow factor," said Avril Graham, executive fashion and beauty editor for Harper's Bazaar U.S.

Among those who said it in red was Allison Janney of "I, Tonya," with long sleeves that fell to the ground. Sofia Carson wore a red cape gown with 26.10 carats of diamonds in her Chopard choker. Meryl Streep also wore red, a Dior with a deep plunge at the neck. Last year's best actress Emma Stone chose skinny trousers and a pink-belted, red tuxedo jacket.

The purple peeps also included presenter Ashley Judd, who went strapless in a dark shade by Badgley Mischka, accompanied by diamond strands.

There was an abundance of white, including fitted looks worn by Margot Robbie (in Chanel Haute Couture), Jane Fonda (in Balmain), Laura Dern (in Calvin Klein) and Mary J. Blige. One actress, Taraji P. Henson, was all leg in ethereal black with a high slit.

"In general, as we typically see with the Oscars, women played it safe in beautiful styles that are a little less risky," said Rachel Torgerson, fashion editor for Cosmopolitan.com. "

She counted Stone among those who went outside the box.

"Those pants were amazing and such a departure from the typical floor-length gown," she said. "You hardly ever see that."

Among the standout guys: "Get Out" writer-director Jordan Peele, in a creamy white tuxedo jacket, and Chadwick Boseman, who honored his kingly T'Challa character in "Black Panther" with a long embellished coat.

Boseman's co-star, Lupita Nyong'o, repped Wakanda in royal, one-sleeved gold with a studded sash element that had black detailing.

One of the evening's brightest pops of color came on Viola Davis in electric pink from the Michael Kors Collection, hoops in her ears and a clutch to match. "Lady Bird" star Saoirse Ronan wore soft pink from Calvin Klein, while Greta Gerwig, who wrote and directed the coming of age film, offered another bright pop—hers in marigold yellow.

In beauty, a side-part trend took hold, both in updos and loose.

Former Lakers star Kobe Bryant wins Oscar for animated short

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Kobe Bryant is a winner in retirement, too.

The former Los Angeles Lakers star won an Oscar in the animated short category for "Dear Basketball," a poem he wrote after ending his 20-year career on the court in 2016.

He'll add it to an already jammed trophy collection that includes five NBA championships with the Lakers, two Olympic gold medals, NBA Finals most valuable player awards, a league MVP award and four All-Star game MVP awards.

Backstage, Bryant looked lovingly at the statue cradled in his hands and mouthed, "My God."

"I feel better than winning championships," he said, a smile never leaving his face. "This is crazy, man, it's crazy."

As executive producer of the six-minute film, Bryant accepted his golden Oscar statue from "Star Wars" star Mark Hamill on Sunday night. He shared the award with Disney animator Glen Keane.

"You don't have to sit in a tub of ice," Keane told Bryant backstage.

Among those offering their congratulations via Twitter were Hall of Famers Magic Johnson, Bill Russell and Shaquille O'Neal, Bryant's former Lakers teammate who admitted, "I'm jealous lol."

Since hanging up his basketball shoes, Bryant has delved into business (a new Nike shoe) and various forms of storytelling.

The 39-year-old sports superstar believed the nomination validated that he could succeed off the court.

"I mean, as basketball players we're really supposed to shut up and dribble but I'm glad we do a little bit more than that," Bryant said on stage.

Bryant said he heard dismissive comments like "That's cute" when he told people he wanted to become a storyteller in retirement.

"The hardest thing when you start over, you have to quiet the ego and begin again. You have to learn the basics of things," he said.

From the stage, Bryant thanked his wife, Vanessa, and three daughters, naming each of them. He spoke a few words of Italian—a language he learned as a child growing up in Italy—and closed by telling them, "You are my inspiration."

Backstage, Bryant credited Oprah Winfrey and writer-producer Shonda Rhimes for sharing their knowledge of the entertainment business.

"When you have mentors like that in your life, everything tends to work itself out," he said.

Bryant's honor comes in the midst of the #MeToo and Time's Up movements to expose abuse and harassment.

In 2003, Bryant was accused of raping a 19-year-old hotel employee in Colorado. He admitted to a sexual encounter with the woman, but denied the assault allegation.

The criminal case was dropped after Bryant's accuser refused to testify. She later filed a civil suit against him, which was settled out of court and included Bryant's public apology to her, although he admitted no guilt.

'Black Panther' is box-office king for third straight week

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Wakanda's reign shows no signs of waning. "Black Panther" is king of the box office for the third straight weekend.

The release from Marvel and Disney brought in $65.7 million domestically this weekend, easily outpacing new releases "Red Sparrow" and "Death Wish," according to studio estimates Sunday.

"Black Panther" has now grossed $500 million domestically after three weeks of release. It's the third fastest film to reach the $500 million plateau.

"Disney is clearly on a roll with 'Black Panther' showing incredible strength as it posts the third biggest third-weekend gross of all time," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for comScore, "and most notably becomes the 10th highest grossing movie of all time in North America after just 17 days in theaters."

Fox's "Red Sparrow," featuring Jennifer Lawrence as a Russian ballerina-turned-super-spy, earned $17 million in its first weekend.

AP

This image released by Disney shows Chadwick Boseman in a scene from Marvel Studios' "Black Panther." "Black Panther" is king of the U.S. box office for the third straight weekend. Studio estimates Sunday, March 4, 2018, say the Marvel movie brought in $65 million in the U.S. this weekend, easily outpacing new releases "Red Sparrow" and "Death Wish."

Another new release, "Death Wish," MGM's reboot of the Charles Bronson action franchise starring Bruce Willis, was third with $13 million.

"Both newcomers performed to expectations but had to compete in a marketplace totally dominated by 'Black Panther,'" Dergarabedian said.

The totals come on a weekend when all industry eyes are on the Academy Awards, which will be handed out in Hollywood later Sunday.

None of the major nominees remain in the box office top 10, though some continue to bring in receipts. "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" reached $52 million domestically through Sunday, and "The Shape of Water" passed $57 million.

"Black Panther," directed by Ryan Coogler and starring Chadwick Boseman and Michael B. Jordan, has become a groundbreaking cinematic phenomenon, giving unprecedented representation for a film of its kind to Africans and African-Americans while winning over every corner of the culture. It should soon shoot past the billion-dollar mark worldwide.

Wakanda's king may finally be knocked from his box-office throne next weekend with the release of director Ava DuVernay's "A Wrinkle in Time," another Disney film that gives groundbreaking representation to African-Americans on both sides of the camera.

"Disney wins no matter how you slice it with that film expected to have a strong debut as 'Black Panther' continues to draw big crowds," Dergarabedian said.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to comScore. Where available, the latest international numbers also are included. Final three-day domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. **"Black Panther,"** $65.7 million.
2. **"Red Sparrow,"** $17 million.
3. **"Death Wish,"** $13 million.
4. **"Game Night,"** $10.7 million.
5. **"Peter Rabbit,"** $10 million.
6. **"Annihilation,"** $5.6 million.
7. **"Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle,"** $4.5 million.
8. **"Fifty Shades Freed,"** $3.3 million.
9. **"The Greatest Showman,"** $2.6 million.
10. **"Every Day,"** $1.5 million.

Annie Lennox to stay on as global ambassador for Oxfam

LONDON (AP)—Annie Lennox says she plans to remain a global ambassador for Oxfam despite allegations of sexual misconduct by some of the charity's employees during a relief operation in Haiti.

The former Eurythmics singer told the Sunday Times magazine she was not going to "walk away" from the charity. The 63-year-old Lennox says while Oxfam's actions were flawed, it has promised change.

Lennox says "it would be an absolute tragedy for millions of people across the world if Oxfam were no longer to function properly because their funding was cut."

Oxfam has been rocked by allegations that seven employees used prostitutes on the charity's property while working in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake that devastated the country.

Bill Cosby goes to court to stop accusers from testifying

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—A day after Hollywood's first Oscars of the #MeToo era, Bill Cosby is going to court on Monday to stop some of his dozens of accusers from testifying at his April 2 sexual assault retrial.

Cosby's retooled defense team, led by former Michael Jackson lawyer Tom Mesereau, is due to clash with prosecutors over the potential witnesses at a pretrial hearing.

Prosecutors raised the prospect of calling as many as 19 women to the witness stand, including model Janice Dickinson, in an attempt to show that an alleged 2004 assault that led to Cosby's only criminal charges was actually part of a five-decade pattern of him drugging and harming women.

Jurors did not have that context when they ended Cosby's first trial last year in a deadlock. A judge allowed just one other accuser's testimony but barred any mention of about 60 others who have come forward to accuse Cosby in recent years.

The only other hints jurors got of Cosby's past came from deposition excerpts from 2005 and 2006 in which he admitted getting quaaludes to give to women he wanted to have sex with.

Cosby's lawyers are urging the same judge, Steven O'Neill, to again limit the number of accusers allowed to testify. They argue that some of the women's allegations date to the 1960s and are "virtually impossible to defend against."

Cosby's lawyers argue that the other accusers' accusations are largely unsubstantiated and are not enough to meet the strict legal standard for allowing prosecutors to present evidence of a defendant's prior bad conduct.

They said they would seek to delay the retrial if any of the women were allowed to testify so they could have more time to investigate their claims.

Jury selection is slated to begin March 29.

Monday's hearing comes just 10 days after Cosby's 44-year-old daughter, Ensa, died of kidney disease. His lawyers have given no indication they would seek to delay the hearing or his retrial.

Man's work-life balance isn't working for overburdened mom

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: I have been married two years, but my husband and I have been together for more than 10. We have a 3-year-old daughter who has needed a few extra doctor appointments and therapy. My husband makes it to none of these extra appointments, some of which are crucial to her future. We both work full-time, but he works six days a week.

I have started to regard him differently because I'm doing everything for our daughter. Sometimes I feel like a single parent. I don't want my marriage to fail, but we aren't connecting anymore. I take off work or switch my hours around because I know that's what you do for your child. He never takes off work, yet he doesn't think twice about going golfing with his boss like it's no big deal. What do you think I should do?

WISCONSIN MOMMY

DEAR MOMMY: Talk to your husband. You won't be able to achieve a more equal balance until you make your feelings known and discuss this with him.

I'm sorry you didn't mention what kind of job your husband has, because it's an important omission. He may be doing everything he can for you and his daughter. A six-day-a-week schedule doesn't offer much flexibility. And please don't judge him for playing golf with his boss. A lot of business is discussed on the links, and his presence may be more compulsory than you realize.

DEAR ABBY: My adult child recently passed away. Although he didn't live with me, I handled the arrangements and held the visitation in my home.

It has been only a few months, but I feel the need to get everything settled. But every time I sit down to write thank-you cards, I become so anxious I find it hard to breathe. Some family members have told me thank-you cards are not expected for bereavement. Can you tell me what the proper etiquette and time frame is in this matter?

HAS TO SETTLE EVERYTHING

DEAR HAS: Please accept my sympathy for the loss of your son. There are two ways to handle the task of thanking those who sent flowers, food or condolence letters. The first is to ask a friend or another family member to help you. The other is as simple as having cards printed that say, "The family of _____ want to thank you for reaching out to us at this sad time," and signing your name. I hope this is helpful for you.

DEAR ABBY: I have a close friend with whom I often travel and attend events. She's a lovely person, but she has the odd habit of singing in public—in gift shops, restaurants, or any public place where music is playing (and sometimes even when it's not). I can't have the radio on in the car without her singing along. She has an OK voice, but her style is a bit operatic. How can I gently tell her that her spontaneous performances are inappropriate and excessive?

NOT KARAOKE IN THE EAST

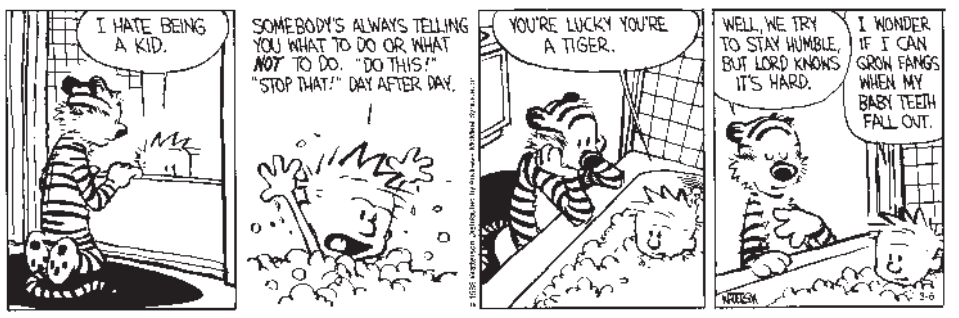
DEAR NOT KARAOKE: I suspect your friend craves attention, which is why she does it. Pay her the compliment she's looking for by telling her how nice her voice is, but you would prefer she not sing when you're out in public together because you find it embarrassing.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

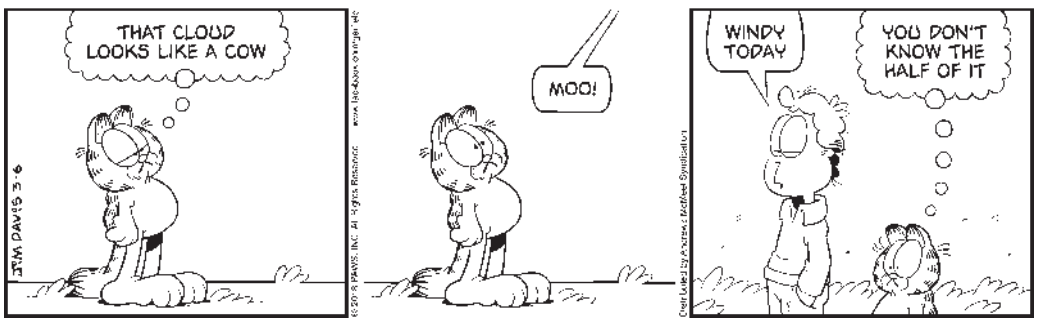
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I HATE BEING A KID.
SOMEBODY'S ALWAYS TELLING YOU WHAT TO DO OR WHAT NOT TO DO. "DO THIS!" "STOP THAT!" DAY AFTER DAY.
YOU'RE LUCKY YOU'RE A TIGER.
WELL, WE TRY TO STAY HUMBLE, BUT LORD KNOWS IT'S HARD.
I WONDER IF I CAN GROW FANGS WHEN MY BABY TEETH FALL OUT.

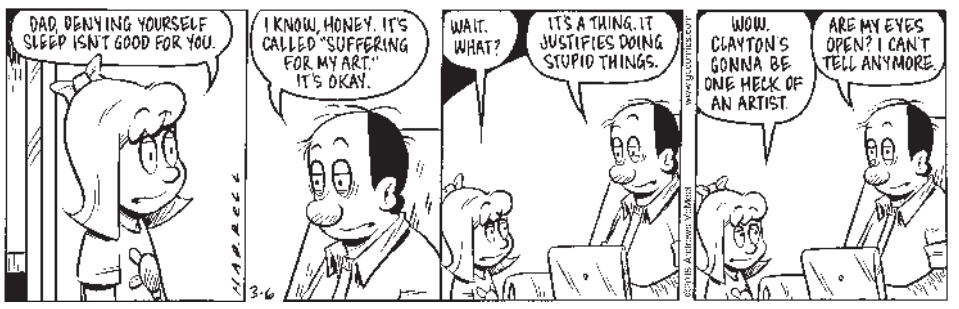
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


DAD, DENYING YOURSELF SLEEP ISN'T GOOD FOR YOU.
I KNOW, HONEY. IT'S CALLED "SUFFERING FOR MY ART." IT'S OKAY.
WAIT. WHAT?
IT'S A THING. IT JUSTIFIES DOING STUPID THINGS.
WOW. CLAYTON'S GONNA BE ONE HECK OF AN ARTIST.
ARE MY EYES OPEN? I CAN'T TELL ANYMORE.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

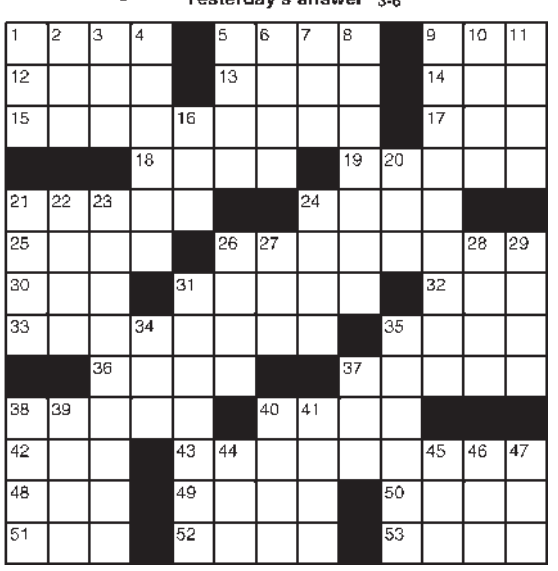
1 Carton sealer
5 Slave
9 Status follower
12 Baldwin of "Aloha"
13 Mine, in Marseille
14 Olympics chant
15 Sausage dog
17 "A spider!"
18 Monet's supply
19 Actions
21 Church leader
24 Country singer Jackson
25 Regrets
26 Many a guard dog
30 Doctrine
31 Enjoy
32 Bar order
33 Curly-tailed dog
35 Cauldron concoction
36 Poet Sandburg
37 19th president
38 Anatomical sac
40 Ticked (off)
42 One-time link
43 Tall, slender dog
48 Tic- — -toe
49 Impale
50 Lady of the haus
51 Bashful
52 Longings
53 Skedaddled

DOWN

1 Wee bit
2 In the manner of
3 Chest muscle
4 Canyon come-backs
5 Satirist Mort
6 Flightless birds
7 Director Howard
8 Hoedown musician
9 Ship launched in 1934
10 Second-hand
11 Erstwhile acorns
16 Knight's address
20 Corn serving
21 Rocker Clapton
22 Rife with foliage
23 Rule of the people
24 Madonna's "Take —"
26 Willy Wonka's creator
27 Egg (Pref.)
28 Out of the storm
29 Reporter's quest
31 Rough
34 Existed
35 Needing money
37 Sneaky laugh
38 Cave creatures
39 Hexagonal state
40 Seabird
41 Peepers
44 Shad product
45 Web address
46 Scot's denial
47 Lemon

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 3-6



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Shaquille O'Neal, 46; Connie Britton, 51; D.L. Hughley, 55; Rob Reiner, 71.

Happy Birthday: You've got more going for you than you realize. Don't be afraid to try something new or to do things differently. Follow the path that calls to you, not the one everybody else is taking. You'll gain respect if you stand independent and determined to make a difference. Your choice of words and your actions will make a difference. Your numbers are 1, 9, 17, 22, 33, 42, 45.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Be secretive about how much you are worth or how in debt you are. Set a goal and don't discuss your plans until you are satisfied with your progress. Pour your energy into physically making things happen. Your tenacity will pay off. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Open discussions are in your best interest. If something concerns you, bring it to the attention of the people involved and make suggestions that can encourage better relationships as well as future prospects. A unique approach will bring good results. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Getting involved in something will lead to disappointment. Don't let anyone take advantage of you. New acquaintances will turn out to be more of a drain than an asset. Avoid insult, injury and arguments. Be secretive regarding personal changes. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Socializing with your colleagues will help you get ahead. Share ideas with your peers. A united front will encourage success. Personal gains and updating your image are favored. Romance will lead to a better relationship with someone special. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Look over your investments, assets and possessions and see where you can cut costs or budget your lifestyle to fit your income. Be smart and less willing to give in to the selfish demands being put on you. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Partnerships should be your priority. Taking care of pressing matters before they have a chance to escalate will save you a lot of time and help you avoid an argument. Be open to suggestions and share your thoughts. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Discipline and hard work will pay off. Use your energy to get ahead, not to argue with someone who is trying to slow you down. Be specific and concentrate on what's important to you. A personal change will do you good. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Take a chance and enjoy the ride. Your insight, intensity and determination coupled with your beliefs and integrity will help you crush anyone who stands in your way. Live life to the fullest and enjoy what you love to do most. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* No matter how hard you try, you'll meet with complaints and discord. The only way to handle people who are giving you a hard time is with diplomacy. Listen and offer a reasonable solution. Arguing will be a waste of time. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Show stability and you will gain respect. If opportunity knocks, a chance to get ahead should not be ignored. Negotiate on your own behalf and don't be afraid to ask for what you are worth. Celebrate with someone you love. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Be careful who you share your emotions with. Someone is likely to leak information if you are too trusting, putting you in a vulnerable position. If you want to make a personal change, stop talking and start making it happen. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Charm and diplomacy will help you get your way. Less talk and more action will make a difference to the outcome of any situation that requires you to work with others. Love, romance and partnerships are favored. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are selective, original and compassionate. You are sensitive and perceptive.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			2			4	6	
								7
		8		5	7			2
3				1		7		
		4	6		9	2		
		2		8				4
6			7	4		1		
1								
	7	5			6			

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/06

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	2	7	1	4	5	8	3	9
5	1	9	3	6	8	4	2	7
8	4	3	7	2	9	6	1	5
9	7	1	5	8	6	3	4	2
3	8	5	2	7	4	1	9	6
4	6	2	9	3	1	7	5	8
1	5	8	6	9	3	2	7	4
2	9	6	4	1	7	5	8	3
7	3	4	8	5	2	9	6	1

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

NY-ALESUND, NORWAY **Solution: 4 letters**

D	R	E	S	T	A	R	T	E	D	C	L	I	F	F
A	Z	H	E	V	S	T	A	T	I	O	N	S	S	U
S	P	E	C	T	A	C	O	R	B	E	L	C	M	N
A	O	E	P	R	A	L	C	I	H	Ⓔ	O	I	A	C
N	B	H	N	P	A	M	B	C	D	Ⓢ	H	E	E	T
E	S	I	T	I	E	E	I	A	E	Ⓐ	T	N	S	I
G	E	M	O	R	N	L	S	L	R	Ⓑ	R	C	Y	O
R	R	A	T	L	E	S	I	E	C	D	A	E	A	N
E	V	D	E	R	O	B	U	N	R	A	E	B	B	A
B	A	R	A	R	O	G	S	L	A	N	G	I	S	L
S	T	I	L	M	U	P	Y	R	A	C	S	O	G	E
T	I	L	W	I	W	T	G	N	I	N	I	M	N	V
I	O	O	L	E	F	Y	A	W	M	A	R	T	I	A
P	N	O	R	T	H	E	R	N	M	O	S	T	K	R
S	S	C	S	D	A	O	R	E	G	G	O	R	B	T

© 2012 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 3/6

Base, Bear, Berth, Biology, Brogger, Cliff, Climate, Cool, Corbel, Crew, Dasan, Earth, Functional, Himadri, Kings Bay, Lichen, Life, Mining, Nature, Northernmost, Observations, Oscar, Peninsula, Port, Radio, Research, Restarted, Roads, Science, Seams, Signals, Snowmobiles, Spitsbergen, Stations, Svalbard, Tramway, Travel, Zeppelin

Yesterday's Answer: Thunderstruck

To purchase **THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 37 through 51,** order on line at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

CLASSIFIED ADS

EMPLOYMENT

(1) Office Clerk-$7.05/hr. with 2-years experience. Email JJ Brother Corp. at jjbrothercorp@gmail.com.

CLICK IT OR TICKET
DAY & NIGHT

American Create Beauty Corporation

(5) Sales Associates
(1) Cleaner

7.05-10.05/hour depends on experience.
Existing work experience is a plus.
Chinese language skill is a plus.
US citizen and Green card preferred.

Contact 488-1868
Submit resume via mail: ahesaipan@gmail.com

American Create Beauty Corporation

(2) Western food cook
(3) Serving staff
(1) BBQ cook
(1) Maintenance/cleaner
(1) Manager

7.05-10.05/hour depends on experience.
Existing work experience is a plus.
Chinese language skill is a plus.
US citizen and Green card preferred.

Contact 488-1868
Submit resume via mail: ahesaipan@gmail.com

American DongSheng Corporation

(6) Sales Associate
(1) Manager
(1) Commercial Cleaner/Stocker
(1) Driver/Deliver/Cleaner
(2) Warehouse clerk

7.05-10.05/hour depends on experience.
Existing work experience is a plus.
Chinese language skill is a plus.
US citizen and Green card preferred.

Contact 488-1868
Submit resume via mail: ahesaipan@gmail.com

JAR DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

Looking for (1) Mason
and (1) Carpenter

5 Years Experience, Skilled Worker with Good Working Character & Personality

P.O. Box 504249 CK,
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel.: 285-5354 / 285-4297

QCM, LLC.

Is seeking for the following:
(6) Construction Workers
U.S. only with 5 years experience in multiple trades.
Must have own reliable transportation, no housing, no insurance. Minimum wage.

Send references, police clearance and resume to QCM, LLC. at PMB 3602 Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950.

American Pretty Car Rental

(1) Manager
(2) Commercial Cleaner

7.05-10.05/hour depends on experience.
Existing work experience is a plus.
Chinese language skill is a plus.
US citizen and Green card preferred.

Contact 488-1868
Submit resume via mail: ahesaipan@gmail.com

American Pretty Tour Corporation

(6) Tour Guide
(1) Manager

7.05-10.05/hour depends on experience.
Existing work experience is a plus.
Chinese language skill is a plus.
US citizen and Green card preferred.

Contact 488-1868
Submit resume via mail: ahesaipan@gmail.com

SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Commercial Cleaner and Maintenance

If interested, bring resume and police clearance to Saipan International School. No telephone calls please.

We are an equal opportunity employer pay no less than the CNMI minimum wage.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Operations Manager

• 3-5 years experience; hardworking; must be able to supervise or manage other orders and tracking from other countries; pick up mails from main post office safely. Must have valid driver's license.

Accountant

• Must be college degree with at least 5 years experience in General Accounting. Must be knowledgeable in the preparation of Financial Statements. 5-7 years experience in Peachtree Accounting Systems. Able to work in flexible hours.

Email resume to:
Irmaramba0621@gmail.com
Mail Express Inc.
PMB 719 Box 10005, Saipan, MP 96950

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

REMIGIO N. NELMIDA
Petitioner,
vs.
SOLEDAD MADRIGAL NELMIDA
Respondent,

FCD-DI-CIVIL ACTION NO. 18-0012

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 8032 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2018.
/s/
Clerk of Court

Salty Saipan Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

(1) General Maintenance
Minimum Qualifications: High school graduate; one (1) year of paid experience as a General Building Structure Maintenance worker in position(s) requiring knowledge of rough and finish carpentry, plumbing, interior and exterior painting and electrician skills; one (1) year of experience as a commercial cleaner, preferably in hotel, lodge or single structure housekeeping setting(s). Experience with use of pesticides and fertilizers and how to avoid the hazardous affect of common chemicals used for building maintenance and repair.
Duties: Ensures that a newly constructed building structure and its surrounding area are maintained in a clean and orderly condition and good repair. Cleans rooms and yard areas; strips and applies wax to floors; shampoos carpets; washes and paints interior and exterior walls; diagnoses and cures building plumbing, electrical and carpentry repair needs. Assesses and completes laundry needs. Operates water blaster and bush whacker.

(1) Cook
Knowledgeable in Western, Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Filipino Cuisine. At least one (1) year work-related experience. Certified Graduate from a Culinary Institute. Drug Testing & Police Clearance Required.

Applicants must be able to work flexible hours i.e. holidays and weekends.

If interested, please send resume to herenuisong@gmail.com

share the power of a wish℠

MAKE-A-WISH®

Visit us at:
Make-A-Wish Guam
590 South Marine Corps Drive. ITC
Bldg, Suite 109
Tamuning, GU 9691303507
Tel: (670) 483-9474
Email: info@guam.wish.org
www.guam.wish.org

"I want to be a firefighter!"
BJ Belacora, 6 yrs.

Saipan Tribune

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

INSTANT MASSIVE BINGO - SITE OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR

A site operations supervisor shall be in charge of all Bingo operations on site. Manages the day-to-day operations including but not limited to cash management, manpower management, vendor management, purchasing management, assets and supplies management and site business relations management. Primarily in-charge of the site's profitability.

Duties and Responsibilities:
- Handles and manages day-to-day Bingo operations such as attending to the daily cash count, ensuring proper implementation of site's standard operating procedures, organizing the staff schedule, handling and resolving staff/players concerns, and reporting site-related issues.
- Compiles, updates and keeps safe all site legal documents (i.e. application of site legal documents such as Business Permits, Lease Contract Renewals, etc.)
- In charge of identification, proper assignment and hiring of manpower needs.
- Assists purchasing by identifying potential vendors, and if needed, gathering of 3 quotations.
- Ensures proper implementation and execution of marketing promotions and activities in coordination with his/her respective Site Marketing Officer.
- Compiles, consolidates and submits required reports as needed by management.
- Handles all check requisitions, Petty Cash Fund, supplies budget and other operations related finances.
- Assists roll out in locating and identifying new potential sites.
- Attends weekly (or as needed) Operations Meeting with the management.

Qualifications:
Education: College Graduate preferred (Management or business-related courses). Lengthy work experience may offset a College Degree.

Work Experience:
- Has worked with and managed an organization or project (advantage)
- Has good performance as a Bingo assistant or cashier (advantage)
- Willing to work irregular hours and overtime
- Must be creative, outgoing, with strong communication skills and initiative
- Strong Bingo and player knowledge or has experience in a retail or service industry with strong customer relations
- Must be independent and can work under stress with minimum supervision Technical Competencies
- Knowledge in Microsoft Office Suite of Applications
- Knowledge in basic computer hardware and software applications
- Knowledge of Bingo games and simple management systems

Other Skills/Competencies
- Above average interpersonal skills – can relate to people from different levels
- People management skills
- Creativity

Applicants must provide a current Resumé with 3 employment references and 3 character references.

Forward Resumés (CV) with references to imb.operations@gmail.com

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 08-2018

"AMENDED"

Opening date: February 16, 2018 Closing date: March 09, 2018

Positions:
(1) Mechanic-II (Saipan)
(1) Electrician (Saipan)
(2) Custodial-I (Saipan)
(1) ARFF General Maintenance-I (Saipan)
(3) General Maintenance-I (Saipan)
(1) HR Specialist (Saipan)
(1) Maintenance/Custodial-I (Rota)
(1) Maintenance/Custodial Supervisor (Rota)
(1) AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance (Rota)
(1) Ports Police/ARFF Trainee (Rota)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the **CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office West Tinian International Airport or Benjamin T. Manglona Rota International Airport.** Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10 year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the West Tinian International Airport or Benjamin T. Manglona Rota International Airport is no later than 5:00 pm on March 09, 2018.

Detailed information on qualifications and position description for the above positions shall be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except on holidays, at the CPA's Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the West Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin T. Manglona Rota International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cpa.gov.mp or cpa.boardsec@pticom.com by phone at (670) 237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

WHATZIT Solution: Vanishing act

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 5-day run in both print and online editions, for as low as $30 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$30
• 5-Liner	$24	$45

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

www.facebook.com/dingbatsgames

Find today's solution in classified section

Mickelson wins playoff for 1st victory since 2013

AP
Phil Mickelson, of the U.S., poses with his Mexico Championship trophy at the Chapultepec Golf Club in Mexico City, Sunday, March 4, 2018.

MEXICO (AP)—Phil Mickelson ended the longest drought of his career with a playoff victory Sunday over Justin Thomas in the Mexico Championship, capping off a final round of lustrous cheers in thin air that included Thomas holing a wedge for eagle on the final hole of regulation.

Mickelson, who closed with a 5-under 66, won for the first time since the 2013 British Open at Muirfield, a stretch of 101 tournaments worldwide.

"I can't put into words how much this means to me," Mickelson said. "I knew it was going to be soon — I've been playing too well for it not to be. But you just never know until it happens."

Thomas was coming off a playoff victory at the Honda Classic last week, and he delivered the biggest moment at Chapultepec Golf Club. Tied for the lead, his shot to the 18th from 119 yards landed in front of the pin and spun back into the hole for an eagle and a 64.

It almost was too good to be true. Thomas, who said Thursday he had never felt worse over the ball, had a 62-64 weekend and suddenly had a two-shot lead.

Mickelson, who turns 48 in June, responded with a two-putt birdie on the par-5 15th and a 20-foot birdie putt on the 16th to tie Thomas.

Tyrrell Hatton, playing in the final group with Mickelson, was stride for stride. He capped off a 3-3-3-3 stretch on the back nine with an eagle at the 15th. But on the final hole, Hatton missed the green to the right, chipped 10 feet by and missed the par putt for a 67 to fall out of a playoff.

The sudden-death playoff—the sixth in eight PGA Tour events this year—didn't last long.

Thomas went long on the par-3 17th hole and chipped to just inside 10 feet. Mickelson's 18-foot birdie putt for the victory swirled around the cup, more agony for a 47-year-old who has seen plenty of it since his last victory.

Thomas, however, never got his par attempt on the right line.

They finished at 16-under 268.

Mickelson won his third World Golf Championships title and, just a month after being on the verge of falling out of the top 50 in the world for the first time in two decades, moves to No. 18 in the world.

Shubhankar Sharma, the 21-year-old from India who started with a two-shot lead, didn't make his first birdie until the 12th hole. He finished with consecutive bogeys for a 74, six shots behind in a three-way tie for ninth. That will leave him on the bubble at No. 66 in the world for making it back to the next World Golf Championship, the Dell Match Play, in three weeks in Texas. Sharma first flies home for the Hero Indian Open next week.

Hatton tied for third with Rafa Cabrera Bello, who holed a bunker shot for eagle on the opening hole and was among six players who had at least a share of the lead.

Mickelson was the first player who appeared to seize control with a birdie on No. 10 to take the lead, and facing a reachable par 5 and a drivable par 4.

Instead, Lefty made it as entertaining as ever.

Going for the green in light rough with the ball below his feet, he hooked it deep into the bushes right of the green, and played his next one when he could barely see the golf ball. That stayed in the trees, and his fourth shot narrowly missed another tree before settling 10 feet away. He made bogey, and just like that, it was a sprint to the finish 7,800 feet above sea level.

Brian Harman and Kiradech Aphibarnrat both had chances until dropping shots at the wrong time.

Thomas made a bogey on the 17th hole twice on Sunday. He missed a 5-foot par putt in regulation that dropped him out of the lead, only to respond with the perfect shot at the right time. It just wasn't good enough.

Mickelson, now with 43 victories on the PGA Tour and 46 around the world, made good on his pledge earlier this year that more victories were in store for him. He has four consecutive top 10s for the first time since 2005.

That also was the last time he had won in a playoff.

It all seems so long ago—playoffs, trophies, consistent play. Now he's just more than a month away from the Masters, and feeling invigorated.

And feeling like a winner.

Fitzpatrick's skills may force NFL teams to rethink position

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Minkah Fitzpatrick understands the value of his skill set.

At 6-foot-1, 201 pounds, he hits like a safety. His speed, hip movement and feet might make him more tailored to cornerback.

So the Alabama star is spending this weekend explaining to NFL scouts he can excel at either, both or some combination of the positions.

"It's a different kind of position, kind of like a combination between safety and corner," said Fitzpatrick, describing the slot corner spot he played in college. "I like to play both safety and corner, so I think slot corner is optimal for my abilities."

If true, Fitzpatrick would be one of the rarest commodities in football—a tweener with an actual fit.

Traditionally when players at the NFL's annual scouting combine are explaining what position suits them best, it's because team executives aren't sure where they should play and the player's draft stock sinks.

But Fitzpatrick's physical gifts could make him a trendsetter in a league that has become increasingly more pass-happy and places a premium on versatility.

He was recruited as a true cornerback, moved to slot corner before the 2015 season, won the starting job and never relinquished it. Coach Nick Saban was so impressed he usually paired Fitzpatrick on the opponent's top receiver, one-on-one.

It didn't take long for Fitzpatrick to make an impact.

After being selected to the SEC's all-freshman team in 2015, he earned first-team All-American honors in 2016 and 2017.

Now he's off to the NFL, where teams are trying to figure out what Saban once did -- the best place for Fitzpatrick to play.

"I think he could play all six defensive back positions. Both corners, both safeties, nickel and dime linebacker," NFL Network draft analyst Mike Mayock said Saturday. "He's the only guy I can say that about. Now, is that a good thing or a bad thing? I've had a couple of coaches say to me, `Hey, is he a difference-maker? Is he a nickel? Where's his ball production?' He had six picks two years ago, but only had one this year. But I look at (his versatility) as a positive."

Stats don't tell complete story of Cards starting pitchers

JUPITER, Fla. (AP)—Early inconsistent outings from St. Louis starting pitchers don't have manager Mike Matheny pushing the panic button.

The statistics, he says, don't tell the whole story.

"Obviously guys are trying to get ready for the season," Matheny said. "You want to see them compete. You want to see some glimpses of things that they have been working on over the winter or are currently working on."

Take Michael Wacha's outing on Sunday, which wasn't a statistical work of art, but wasn't as bad as the final line might indicate, either.

The 26-year old righty allowed two runs and five hits in three innings against Houston.

With runners on first and second and one out in the second, Evan Gattis hit a comebacker that caught Wacha in the right shin and bounded away for an infield hit. What could have been an inning-ending double play instead prolonged an inning, leading to the Astros' first run.

"I felt good," Wacha said. "Just missed a few spots where I let them put it in play."

One out away from his ending his day, Wacha tried to sneak a 2-2 fastball past Jose Altuve. The American League MVP lofted a deep fly ball to right field that would have been the third out of the inning on most days, but on Sunday it rode a brisk win over the right field wall for Altuve's first homer of the spring.

"The scoreboard really didn't translate," Matheny said. "A lot of ground balls that kind of found their way through. Pop up that made its way out."

Wacha's outing came on the heels of the second consecutive poor outing from free agent signee Miles Mikolas, who has now allowed 10 earned runs over 4 2/3 innings in his first two starts with the Cardinals.

In search of a fifth starter, St. Louis signed Mikolas to two-year, $15.5 million contract, opting to sign a player who spent the previous three seasons in Japan over the likes of bigger name, higher price tag free agents like Jake Arrieta and Yu Darvish, or even re-signing Lance Lynn.

"I thought yesterday was better," Matheny said of Mikolas' outing on Saturday. "We saw less mistakes at the middle of the plate, middle of the zone and height. He was better at the top. I thought the breaking ball looked sharper. Featured some good curve balls."

Prince's go-ahead 3 hands Hawks win over Suns

ATLANTA (AP)—Taurean Prince knew the Atlanta Hawks had the perfect set-up for a dramatic 3-pointer.

Get Miles Plumlee to set a screen close to the arc, and Prince would take care of the rest.

"It's a great feeling," Prince said. "Hopefully, I'll put up more."

Prince hit the go-ahead 3 with 7.6 seconds remaining and finished with 22 points, helping the Hawks hold off the Phoenix Suns, 113-112, on Sunday.

Devin Booker's potential winner for Phoenix, a 15-foot shot from the right baseline, bounced off the rim with Tyler Dorsey defending as time expired.

"I got the shot I wanted," Booker said. "I picked a point on the floor. I got to it. I just missed it."

T.J. Warren scored 35 points, and Elfrid Payton had 11 points, 10 rebounds and a season-high 14 assists for the Suns. Booker finished with 20 points, ending a streak of four straight games in which he had at least 30.

In a matchup of two struggling teams, neither led by more than seven points. Prince's basket marked the 24th lead change.

Phoenix has lost 22 of its last 26 games, dropping to 19-46, second-worst in the Western Conference. Atlanta, which had lost five of six, improved to 20-44, worst in the East.

Dennis Schroder had 21 points for Atlanta but did not play in the closing minutes because of what appeared to be a leg injury after he fell hard to the floor on his right side in the third. Schroder said after the game that he felt fine. Hawks coach Mike Budenholzer played Jaylen Morris the rest of the way.

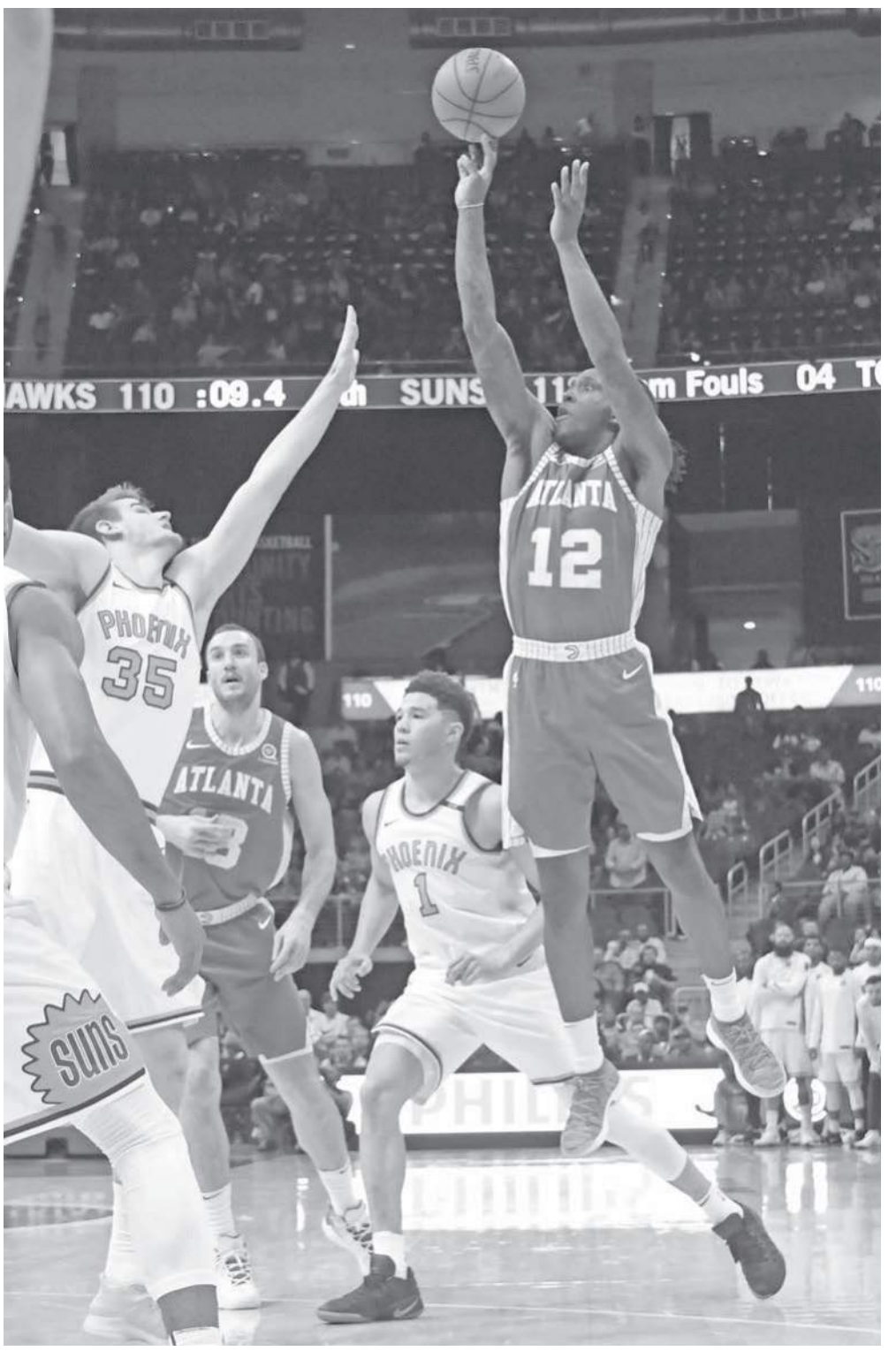
"Just happy a lot of those guys stepped up in situations they're not in a lot," Budenholzer said. "A lot of good stuff for the whole game. We got better."

Warren's layup with 20 seconds remaining gave Phoenix a 112-110 lead. After Prince scored, Suns coach Jay Triano called a timeout and set up a clear-out play for Booker.

"If you bring a screen, they'd probably trap it," Triano said. "But we got the look we wanted on the clear side."

Phoenix finished with 33 assists and outscored the Hawks by 20 in the paint, thanks in part to 17 points from Marquese Chriss.

Atlanta tied a season-high with 17 3s. Prince went 6 for 8 beyond the arc.



AP

Atlanta Hawks forward Taurean Prince (12) shoots a winning three-point jump shot as the Phoenix Suns forward Dragan Bender (35) defends during the final moments of an NBA basketball game Sunday, March 4, 2018, in Atlanta.

Raptors 103, Hornets 98

In Toronto, after three double-digit losses to Toronto, the Charlotte Hornets finally turned in a strong performance against the Raptors.

Unfortunately, it still wasn't enough to beat the Eastern Conference leaders.

DeMar DeRozan scored 19 points, Jonas Valanciunas had 18 points and 13 rebounds and the Raptors beat the Hornets for Toronto's 11th win in 12 games.

Ahead by 13 points to begin the fourth quarter, Toronto saw its lead dwindle to two before DeRozan and Lowry made key 3-pointers.

"It wasn't a pretty game," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said. "Last year we probably would have lost that game, but we were mature enough to make plays, the right plays."

Serge Ibaka scored 17 points and Lowry had 14 points and 10 rebounds as the Raptors completed their first season sweep of Charlotte since 2006-07. Toronto improved to 26-5 at Air Canada Centre, the best home record in the NBA.

"They're playing as well as anyone in our league at this point," Hornets guard Kemba Walker said. "They move the ball really well, they trust each other."

Fred VanVleet and C.J. Miles each scored 12 points for the Raptors, who have won four straight since an overtime loss to Milwaukee on Feb. 23.

Walker scored 27 points and Dwight Howard had 10 points and 10 rebounds for the Hornets, who lost their third straight, all on the road. Charlotte is 10-21 away from home.

Jeremy Lamb scored 16 points, Frank Kaminsky had 15 and Nicolas Batum added 10.

Pacers 98, Wizards 95

In Washington, Victor Oladipo scored 33 points, Bojan Bogdoanovic added 20 and Indiana beat Washington to overtake the Wizards by a half-game for fourth place in the Eastern Conference.

Myles Turner added 12 points and 13 rebounds for Indiana, which almost gave away a 17-point lead but never trailed. Bradley Beal scored 22 points and had a career-high 11 assists for Washington.

Pelicans 126, Mavericks 109

In Dallas, Jrue Holiday scored 30 points, Nikola Mirotic added 24 in a rare start and New Orleans won its eighth in a row, beating Dallas.

Anthony Davis had 23 points and 13 rebounds, scoring most of his points from inside 5 feet.

Dirk Nowitzki scored a season-high 23 points for the Mavericks, passing Elvin Hayes for eighth on tyhe career field goals list with 10,980.

Bucks 118, 76ers 110

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 34 points and Milwaukee snapped a four-game losing streak, scoring 36 points off Philadelphia's season-high 26 turnovers.

Eric Bledsoe added 22 points, and Jabari Parker had 13 to keep Milwaukee in seventh place in the Eastern Conference—a half-game game behind the sixth-place 76ers.

Dario Saric scored 25 points, Joel Embiid had 19, and JJ Redick 17 for the 76ers.

Kings 102, Knicks 99

In Sacramento, Skal Labissiere made a 3-pointer with 1.6 seconds left and Sacramento beat New York after blowing a 19-point lead in the fourth quarter.

New York trailed 92-73 early in the fourth quarter and appeared headed for a lopsided defeat before rallying to tie it at 97 on Michael Beasley's short turnaround jumper with 1:08 left.

Bogdan Bogdanovic led the Kings with 22 points. Tim Hardaway Jr. scored 24 points for New York.

Clippers 123, Nets 120

In Los Angeles, Austin Rivers scored 27 points, Tobias Harris added 26 as Los Angeles handed Brooklyn its ninth consecutive road loss.

Lou Williams added 21 points for tyhe Clippers. Caris LeVert led the Nets with 27 points. The Nets have lost 10 of their last 11 overall.

Reinventing Wade: At 36, another new role awaits Heat star

MIAMI (AP)—This is not the first reinvention of Dwyane Wade.

Or the second.

Or the third.

His 15 NBA seasons have been a series of role changes—the latest being where the most celebrated player in Miami Heat history watches five younger players start games while he waits for a chance to enter as a sub. But nearly a month after the trade that brought him back to the Heat, Wade has zero complaints.

"The finished product of Dwyane, you guys have seen me win three championships and all that," Wade said. "But I've had so many different roles in my life in playing basketball. I came off the bench for a long time before y'all knew who I was. My ego is not too big at this point. I'm 36 years old. These guys are the future of this organization and this team. I'm definitely not the future. I'm cool with that."

Still, he's vital to Miami's hopes right now.

Wade is clearly going to play a sizable role in the Heat playoff push, in all sorts of ways. The savvy veteran who can be a de facto assistant coach in the locker room, on the practice floor and on the bench.

The guy who makes crowds in Miami roar simply by removing his warmups and walking to the scorer's table to check into games. The closer, who'll be on the floor in the most critical minutes of games.

He's just not starting.

"I started embracing it when I was at the previous team, because I'm a winner," Wade said. "I'm always about doing whatever I can to help whatever team I'm on be in its best position. I've done that my whole life. It's not just now. I've done it in the Olympics, I've done it all over the place. It takes nothing away from who I am or what I've accomplished."

Before now, the last season that Wade played and wasn't a full-time starter was the summer of 2008—on the U.S. Olympic team at the Beijing Games, where he was the leading scorer on the way to a gold medal. Prior to that, he thinks it was his fourth-grade team.

"It really is similar to the role he had with the USA team," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "He'd come in and be a force of nature."

There have been some signature moments already in his second stint with the Heat. Wade's winner against Philadelphia last week was the 12th of his career. In the first 29 seasons of Heat basketball, only two players posted consecutive 25-point games off the bench. Wade is already the third name on that list.

At home against Detroit on Saturday, he was serenaded with "M-V-P" and "We Want Wade" chants.

"The guy is just a great player," said Pistons coach Stan Van Gundy, Wade's first coach with the Heat in 2003. "Has been since he walked into the league. To still be doing what he's done these last few games at this point in his career is pretty impressive. But he's back home. He's back home. I think he probably feels that."

Wade agrees, saying the return has been an energy boost.

Falcons, GSM ease past opponents

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Falcons and GSM kept their records clean as they coasted past their respective foes in the 2018 Saipan Baseball League last week at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

The Falcons improved to a 3-0 mark following a 32-4 thrashing of the Outlaws last Thursday night, while GSM got the same record for a share of first place after defeating the Blue Jays last Friday, 17-5.

GSM found its target in the fourth inning to establish a safe distance against Outlaws. GSM scored seven runs in the pivotal top of the fourth, turning a shaky 3-2 lead to a 10-2 advantage. GSM then added three runs in the fifth and four in the seventh for the early win via 10-run mercy rule.

Pat Alepuyo went 3-for-5 for GSM and scored two RBIs. Pete Tomokane and Bryon Kaipat also had two RBI each off a 2-for-3 and 2-for-4 performance at the plate, respectively. Franko Nakamura was only 1-for-4, but collected four runs, while Diego Camacho and Jerome Delos Santos chipped in two runs each.

The Blue Jays lost the game after hanging tough in the opening inning as they were held scores in last next four.

Meanwhile, in the Falcons-Outlaw one-sided game, the former delivered 13 runs at the top of the second inning to finish off the latter after only five innings. The Falcons got eight earned runs in the pivotal fourth inning, including a two-run single from Peter Lieto.

The Falcons then slowed down in the third inning as they made only one run, but finished strong, combining for 17 more runs in the last two to complete their domination of the hapless Outlaws.

Peter Lieto finished with five RBIs and was 3-for-5 at the plate, while Ian Norita, J.J. Lifoifoi, and Frankie Lieto contributed three RBIs each. Lifoifoi hit 4-for-5 and scored two runs, while Norita went only 2-for-4, but tallied four runs. Frankie Lieto also had four runs on a 3-for-4 at bat.

The Outlaws made all its runs in the third inning and has yet to enter the win column this season, absorbing its third defeat.

In other results last week, defending champions Aces topped the Indians, 9-2, for their first victory after losing their season debut against the Falcons last month.

PSG must beat Real Madrid without Neymar

PARIS (AP)—It's time for Paris Saint-Germain to live up to its own hype, and what better way than knocking Real Madrid out of the Champions League without Neymar?

The teams meet on Tuesday at Parc des Princes in Paris, with PSG trailing 3-1 after capitulating late in the first leg of the round of 16.

For several seasons now, some PSG players have talked themselves up as good enough to win the Champions League. Yet the hard fact staring back at them from the gilded mirror is that, despite enormous investment from Qatari owners QSI for nearly seven years, PSG has never been beyond the quarterfinals in that time. Its lone semifinal appearance was way back in 1995.

This season feels like make-or-break for PSG to be taken seriously as one of Europe's elite clubs. But there is a huge hurdle to overcome first: Madrid.

With three Champions League titles in the past four years, and 12 overall, Madrid is precisely the club PSG dreams about becoming one day.

But coach Unai Emery's side must first focus on turning around the 3-1 deficit—and doing so without Neymar, who was injured Feb. 25 in a French league game against Marseille.

The Brazil forward is recovering from surgery on his right foot and may not even play again for PSG this season.

PSG splashed out a world record 222 million euros ($260 million) to sign Neymar from Barcelona. It spent another 180 million euros ($216 million) on Kylian Mbappe from Monaco but the 19-year-old forward is doubtful as he recovers from a cut to his right ankle.

Should Mbappe fail to play, it might not be all bad news for PSG.

It would almost certainly mean a front three of Julian Draxler, top scorer Edinson Cavani and Angel Di Maria, who has scored 13 goals since January.

They tore Barcelona apart last season when PSG won 4-0 at home in the first leg of the last 16. But this summer's arrival of Neymar and Mbappe put a swift end to that promising attacking trio.

PSG's firepower has never been the issue, however. The real problem is keeping goals out.

A lack of composure in big games has often undone PSG, notably last season when the club made history by becoming the first club eliminated after winning the first leg 4-0. Barcelona's 6-1 victory in the return will haunt PSG until it proves capable of coming through big games, starting with Tuesday's encounter.

PSG's fragile defense conceded two late goals in Madrid and will have to cope with the return to top form of Cristiano Ronaldo.

He is the competition's all-time leading scorer and current top scorer with 11, including two in the first leg. The Portugal forward set a record on Saturday by becoming the fastest to reach 300 La Liga goals.

Madrid got a further boost with midfielders Luka Modric and Toni Kroos returning to training on Sunday. Neither has played since picking up knocks in the first leg.

There is little suspense in Tuesday's other Champions League game. Five-time champion Liverpool is at home to two-time champion Porto, having won 5-0 away.

It's far more balanced on Wednesday when Tottenham is at home to two-time winner Juventus, last year's runner-up, having drawn 2-2 in Turin.

Fans of Swiss club Basel may be dreading the trip to Manchester City, which is scoring for fun this season and romped to a 4-0 away win in Switzerland.

AP

PSG's Thiago Silva, right, challenges for the ball with Marseille's Lucas Ocampos during the French Cup soccer match between Paris Saint-Germain and Marseille at the Parc des Princes Stadium, in Paris, France, Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2018.

GCA

From Page 28

the good spiking skills of Sam Ryu and Steven Balakrishna, who were perfectly set by their teammate Kat Saures. GCA 2 went on to keep its wide margin and ended the opening set when MCS 2 failed to return a serve from Ryu.

In the second set, MCS 2 scored the first point, but it was an all-GCA 2 show after that with Balakrishna, Ryu, and Saures continuing to play steady for the top-ranked squad. Ryu then got the much-needed break late in the game with GCA 2 just a few points away from ousting MCS 2. He was replaced by Sean Gil, whose first two attempts for a spike went wide, but third time was the charm for the multi-sport athlete as his kill gave the Eagles the match point.

With the victory, GCA 2 set up a semis duel against Agape Christian School, which pulled off an upset over last year's finalist Saipan International School in their playoff game at the Geckos court in As Lito yesterday.

SIS prevailed in the first set, 25-14, but could not get the job done, as Agape recovered in the second, 25-14, and eked out a 15-13 triumph in the deciding third set to steal the win. Agape placed fifth going into the playoffs with its 4-9 record, while SIS was seeded higher at No. 4 after posting a 7-5 mark in the preliminary round.

Meanwhile, the other semis pairing will have MCS 1 battling GCA 1. The Knights advanced to the Final Four following a 25-4, 25-14 domination of Seventh-Day Adventist School over at the MCS Gym in Chalan Kanoa yesterday. SDA was ranked at No. 6 in the single-elimination playoffs after earning a 4-8 mark.

The semis matches will be played tomorrow with the Eagles aiming to arrange an all-GCA finale to keep the division championship in their possession. GCA 1 won the title in the 2016-2017 season after sweeping SIS in the finals, 25-12, 25-7.

CNMI

From Page 28

ber of delegates with 24. Basketball (men's and women's) has 22, the same number of athletes that indoor volleyball will be sending to Yap, which will host the quadrennial meet from July 15 to 28. Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association will also send beach volleyball teams (men's and women's and two coaches), while canoe listed 20 delegates (men and women).

The CNMI will have 16 representatives in the medal-rich athletics competition, while the revived table tennis group will bring nine delegates to Yap. Swimming will have six athletes for the ocean swim and one coach, while nine will compete in the weightlifting event.

Each delegate will receive $500 financial assistance from NMSA in a form of reimbursement once they returned from Yap. The $500 is approximately half of the costs of the airfare and per diem of each delegate.

NMSA is also open to talks on providing financial help to local sports federations which are bringing athletes from the mainland to represent the CNMI in Yap. The amount, however, will depend on the decision of the NMSA board.

Meanwhile, White said Micro Games officials will meet this week to discuss eligibility rules. Initially, any athlete with Micronesian ancestry can represent the CNMI provided she or he meets the three-year residency rule. For athletes without Micronesian ancestry, a seven-year residency rule will be in effect.

KANOA

From Page 28

the seven-team field.

Again, Paulyn Joyce stood tall for Kanoa, as she scored four goals in the easy win. Sharmaine Francisco, Ericka Santiago, and Kiara Manganti chipped in one apiece, while MP United got its pair of goals from Stellalou McCallion and Audrey Castro.

Kanoa opened a 3-0 lead against MP United at halftime and was never threatened in the second half. Joyce knocked in back-to-back goals in the first half with her first coming in the 21st minute and the second in the 28th. Manganti drew first blood for the winning squad in the 18th minute.

Francisco then made it a 4-0 advantage when she hit the board five minutes into the second half, while Joyce earned a hat trick when she scored anew in the 52nd. MP United, on the other hand, broke its silence, thanks to McCallion's shot three minutes later, while Castro's goal came in the 59th.

Kanoa, however, got the two goals back with Santiago finding her target in the 69th minute and Joyce closing out for the division leader a minute later.

In other results, the two other games at the FMS pitch ended in draws.

In the first match, Shirley's FC forced a standoff with Tan-Holdings when Katrina Costales scored in the 49th minute. Earlier in the 18th minute, Mary Joy Aniana handed Tan-Holdings the shaky lead.

In the final tiff last weekend, it was Paire which managed to tie Matansa, thanks to Anisa Villagomez's conversion in the 39th minute. Villagomez's equalizer was recorded seven minutes after Ellysah Serrano registered the first goal in the closely-fought match.

Meanwhile, Week 5 games in the division will be played this Saturday with Kanoa hoping to extend its winning run to four when it faces Southern United at 4pm. In the first match at 1pm, Paire will duel MP United, while in the second match at 2:30pm, it will be Matansa versus Shirley's. TanHoldings takes a break in Week 5 and will return to action next weekend when it meets Kanoa.

SDA 9th Annual 5K Hope Run Fundraiser

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Runners cruise along Beach Road during last month's Seventh-Day Adventist School 9th Annual 5K Hope Run Fundraiser.

Volunteers man the registration area early morning.

A runner receives his finisher stick from one of the volunteers assigned at the Garapan Fishing Base.

First overall finisher Ronald Villafria, right, poses with SDA School principal Randy Yates during the awards ceremony for last month's race.

Tania Tan, right, is all smiles after receiving her third place overall certificate from SDA School principal Randy Yates.

Second overall finisher Luke Doss, right, is congratulated by SDA School principal Randy Yates.

Coca-Cola Saipan/Powerade employees provide refreshment for the runners.

Participants in the 5K fundraiser gather for a group photo after completing the race.

Mickelson wins playoff for 1st victory since 2013

PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Prince's go-ahead 3 hands Hawks win over Suns

PAGE 25

GCA leads semis cast

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Grace Christian Academy's two teams barged into the semi-final round of the middle school division of the 2017-2018 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association after eliminating their respective opponents yesterday at the Eagles court in Navy Hill.

GCA 1 took the first Final Four berth after ousting Saipan Community School, 25-20, 25-10. GCA 1 was ranked second going into the playoffs as it finished the double-round robin regular season with a 10-3 record—the same mark Mt. Carmel School 1 earned, but the Eagles won the tiebreak. SCS, on the other hand, placed No. 7 at the end of the preliminary round after gaining a 3-10 record.

GCA 2 was the top finisher in the regular season with a perfect 13-0 record and arranged a quarterfinal showdown against the last-ranked MCS 2. As expected, the unbeaten squad eased past the Knights, 25-7, 25-12, to notch the second semis berth.

The Caesar Libut-coached GCA 2 was up by only 6 early in the first set, 8-2, before pulling away, 16-3, behind

See GCA on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Grace Christian Academy 2's Sam Ryu, left, tosses the ball, while a Mt. Carmel School 1 player attempts for a block during the first set of their playoff game in the 2017-2018 Commonwealth Coalition of Private Schools Association yesterday at the Eagles court in Navy Hill.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The 2018 Micronesian Games flame built atop a giant clam shell will be lit in July when Yap hosts the regional competition at the Yap Sports Complex.

CNMI to send 140 to Micro Games

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With the latest addition of the CNMI's spearfishing team, the Commonwealth's delegation to the 2018 Micronesian Games in Yap increased to 140.

"We will be sending 140 athletes, coaches, and officials to Yap now that the NMSA (Northern Marianas Sports Association) board agreed to accept the spearfishing group to Team CNMI," NMSA president Michael White said during their monthly meeting last Thursday at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Spearfishing will have four athletes and a coach, while baseball has the most num-

See CNMI on Page 26

Kanoa still unbeaten in girls U16

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Kanoa Football Club won the battle of undefeated teams in the girls U16 division of the 2018 NMIFA Spring Youth League after downing MP United FC, 7-2, last Saturday at the Francisco M. Sablan Middle School Field.

The victory was the third in as many games for Kanoa and gave the squad the solo lead in

See KANOA on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Paire Football Club, left, and Matansa FC players kick the ball during the first half of their girls U16 division game in the 2018 NMIFA Spring Youth League last Saturday at the Francisco M. Sablan Middle School Field.